

A N  
*Help and Exhortation*  
T O  
Worthy Communicating.  
O R, A  
TREATISE  
Describing the  
Meaning, Worthy Recepti-  
on, Duty, and Benefits  
O F T H E  
*Holy SACRAMENT.*  
A N D

Answering the *Doubts of Conscience*, and  
*other Reasons*, which most generally detain Men  
from It.

Together with Suitable

DEVOTIONS  
A D D E D.

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*The Second Edition.*

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By *JOHN KETTLEWELL*,  
Vicar of *Coles-hill* in *Warwick-shire*.

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L O N D O N :

Printed by *H. C.* for *Robert Kettlewell*, at the *Hand*  
*and Scepter*, against *S. Dunstan's Church* in *Fleet-*  
*street*, MDC LXXXVI.



1844

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AN  
*Help and Exhortation*  
TO  
Worthy Communicating.  
OR, A  
TREATISE  
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Meaning, Worthy Reception,  
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TO THE  
Right Honourable  
*SIMON* Lord *DIGBY*,  
BARON *DIGBY*  
OF  
*GEASHILL*.

MY LORD,  
**T**HE *Holy Eucharist* is  
a Rite of the great-  
est Honour and  
Endearment that ever God  
vouchsafed to Men, and the  
most Sublime and Blisful  
A 3 Instance

## *The Epistle*

Instance of our Communion with him. For therein he calls us to his own *Table*, not to attend as *Servants*, but to Feast with him as his *Friends* : He treats us with the most Magnificent Fare, presenting That to us for our Food, which one would think were not to be *eaten*, but *adored*, even the most Sacred *Body* and *Blood* of his own *Son*, in which he conveys to us all the Benefits of our Redemption. And being thus apt to excite in us the highest Devotion, and to enrich us with the greatest Fullness of Grace and Blessing, one would expect

## Dedictory.

pect it should be had in Re-  
verence, and most Thank-  
fully Received by every  
Christian.

But yet in *our Days* what  
part of *Religion* doth so ge-  
nerally suffer, or is so uni-  
versally neglected among  
Men ? For the greatest  
Numbers have either little  
or no *Reverence* at all for it,  
or too much, which makes  
them afraid of it. They neg-  
lect it thro' Carelesness and  
Causeless Scruples, or Pro-  
phane it by Unworthy and  
Disrespectful Usage : So  
that among all the Profes-  
sors of Christianity, few  
pay

## *The Epistle*

pay that Honour to their Lord, or secure that Benefit to themselves by Receiving, which he intended All should do.

This, *My Lord*, is the Grief and Complaint of all, who have any Just Honour for their Dearest Saviour, and this Venerable Ordinance; or any Generous Compassion for the Souls of others. And that, by the Grace of God, I may help something to redress it, I have endeavoured to describe a *Worthy Communicating*, and to set out both the Duty and Advantages of it in this Treatise, that

## *Dedictory.*

that thereby I may recommend it to the Choice of all who are Wise, and to the Consciences of all that are Religious. In the Management whereof, I have shunn'd all fruitless Disputes, and nice Speculations, seeking only to get it Authority among the *Loose*, and Reverence with the *Careless*, and to reconcile it to the *Scrupulous*, and to make the Duty as Clear, Easie, and Useful as I can to all. Particularly, I have designed all along to make it not only an Honorable Remembrance of our Dear Lord, but a most Solemn



## *The Epistle*

and Strict Engagement to a Good Life in all that use it; for then I am sure they will be infinitele Happy in it.

And this Discourse, *My Noble Lord*, I here humbly offer to Your Lordship, desiring it may stand as a Publick Testimony of the great Honour and Affection I have for those Excellencies, that shine so clear in You. God has endow'd your great Mind with a strong Love, and a steady Choice of Virtue; and, what I have beheld with Pleasure, with a Generous, and, as there is  
Place

### *Dedictory.*

Place for it, an Active Com-  
passion for those that want  
it. You have the True Wis-  
dom, upon Deliberate and  
Well-studied Reasons, to be  
Religious; and the Courage,  
in this Audacious Age,  
when Irreligion is set up  
for the only Creditable  
Dress, to own it, and study  
to be thought so. For 'tis  
Your Lordships Honour  
to think that nothing can  
truly make You Greater,  
than to be an Humble  
Worshipper, and Faith-  
ful Servant of your Holy  
Saviour. This Noble Pie-  
ty and Zeal for Good-  
ness, will endear You, *My*  
*Lord,*

## *The Epistle*

Lord, to Almighty God, and to all Good Men. And if by these Papers I may in any wise contribute to them, I shall think myself happy in having serv'd to set on the Vertuous Growth of one, whom I hope God has set out in a Time that so infinitely needs it, for an Illustrious Example, that may give both Ornament and Support to Religion.

But besides this, *My Lord*, I have another End in this Dedication; and that is, That these Sheets may remain a Lasting Monument

## *Dedictory.*

ment of my Gratitude for the Endearing Favours I have received from Your Noble Hand. They were Composed for the Benefit of a Place where I am now fixed, and whereto I was design'd by Your great Generosity and Nobleness, when I thought of nothing less. For so truly Publick was Your Lordships Spirit in the Filling of that Church, that You pitch'd upon a Person whose Face You had never known, and who never knew of it, only because You believed he would make it his Care to promote

## *The Epistle*

mote Religion, and to Benefit those Souls which You had to commit to him. And this, *My Lord*, I humbly beg Your Lordships Leave to mention, not for Your own, but for the Publicks sake. For in this degenerate Age, when either Filthy Lucre, or at least some other mean and fordid End, have made a Merchandise, and bred Corruption even in the most *Sacred Trusts*, I think the World has need of *such Examples*.

## *Dedicatory.*

I have nothing more to add, but to beg of Almighty God, That he who brings about the Noblest Ends by the Weakest and most Unlikely Instruments, would make this Book effectual to his own Honour and Service; and also Bless Your Lordship with a Continuance and Encrease of all Virtuous Excellencies, Honour, and Happiness in this World, till at last he shall take You to shine in his own Immortal Glory in the World to come. This is the most hearty Prayer of him, who very  
much

*The Epistle, &c.*

much for Your Favours,  
but more for the true Af-  
fection and Honour You  
bear to the God and Sa-  
viour he serves, is in all  
sincerity,

*My Honoured Lord,*

*Your Lordships*

*most Affectionate*

*From Your Lord-  
ships House near  
Coles-hill, Jun.  
27. 1683.*

*obliged Chaplain,*

*and humble Servant,*

28 00 62

*John Kettlewell.*

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dying for us. To remember him is not bare-  
ly to call to mind that once there was such  
a Person, but to think of his particular  
Quality and Relations to us, which are  
worth remembering; as of his being our  
most*



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### PART II.

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Covenant with God, and a League of Friendship with our Brethren, and are vouchsafed the highest Honour, and receive Tokens of greatest Love, and enjoyment of present Graces, and pledges of future Glory from him: all which no Good man ought, and no Ingenuous man will decline, when he is call'd to them. This Duty obliges those only who are of Age for it, and them too only at such times as they have an Opportunity and a fit Occasion offered. An Objection against its being a Duty, from 1 Cor. II. 25, answered. The Neglect of it is a great Sin. This God may excuse in those good Souls, who through Ignorance or Error are held back, and because of their over-high Veneration for it, think themselves unworthy to come to it, whilst in the honesty of their Hearts they thus mistake it. But he will not excuse it in them when they are better inform'd; and much less in others, who neglect it because they are careless of it, or too Wicked and Impenitent to receive it.

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*safer side. By Damnation is meant, 1. A Damning Sin, which is deadly 'till we repent of it; and such are both unworthy Eating, and sinful Abstaining, so that they are equal as to that Point. 2. Temporal Penalties, which were inflicted for their Intemperance at this Feast, and other Disorders peculiar to those times, which are not now usual in ours; so that the Fear of them need not discourage us from it.*

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*A Third Hindrance is, because therein they are to promise concerning every Sin, that they will no more commit it; which Promise some dare not make, because they fear they shall not keep it. If this be sufficient to hinder any man from the Communion, it ought also to hinder him from Prayers, and being Baptized a Christian. But it must not hinder men from any of them. 1. Let them promise this Amendment, and keep it, and then the Doubt is answered. They ought to make it. And by God's Grace they may perform it, if they may have a mind to it. 2. If after some time they happen to break*

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it in any Instance, they have the Benefit of Repentance afterwards. A Fourth Hindrance is the great difficulty supposed to be in it, and want of time and leisure to prepare for it. This lies not more against the Communion, than against an Holy Life, and all Religion. But it must not put us by from any of them. For, 1. If it required all that Time and Pains which is supposed, that would be no Excuse for any of us to neglect it. To true Penitents, the Time and Pains is not so great as is imagined. It requires more of Ill men, but less of Good, who may prepare for it in a less time, yea, if used to Self-examination, upon a few Minutes warning. 3. The poorest and most employed have time sufficient, if they would use it to that end: And where they have fewer helps, and less time, the less Preparation is accepted of them. A Fifth Hindrance is, because they see others, or have found themselves to be no better by it; so that 'tis not worth their while to fit themselves for it. If this have any Force, it is not to be restrained to the Sacrament, but holds stronger against Prayers, and other Parts of Worship. But it ought not to hinder any Persons. For, 1. Where it is true, there is no excuse from it. 2. In all good mens case 'tis false, for they are really better by it; many by improving in their goodness

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ness, and by continuing in it, for which it is richly worth their pains to come to it.  
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2. W

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2. We are not bound to shew them all the Offices of special Esteem, Trust and Confidence, which are not fit to be placed on all men, but on such only as are qualified for them. When they sufficiently shew Repentance of their Fault, they are to be re-admitted to the same state of Favour and Friendship. We must be Candid in Judging when their Repentance is sufficiently evidenced. An humble Confession is ordinarily a sufficient Proof of it for the first Fault; but not when it has been oft repeated. Luk. 17. 4, which seems to affirm it, answer'd. Several Cases clear'd, which are sometimes thought by Pious Souls to be a breach of Charity towards Enemies, but in reality are not. As, not forgetting Injuries or Unkindnesses, but still retaining a Remembrance of them. Thinking the worse of those who offered them. Being troubled at the sight of them, as that puts them in mind of the great Losses they have sustain'd by them. Shewing more reserve, and carrying a greater distance in Converse with them, than with other men. These are no breach of Charity towards them, nor can be a just Hindrance from the Communion,

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nution. But they are sinful, 1. When they are begun upon an unjustifiable Ground. Such they always are, 1. When they are Vindictive, not Reparative; as when we sue insolvent Persons; or others upon such Words or Actions, for which, besides Costs, no Damages that are valuable are like to be allotted us. 2. When they are for Reparation of small things, which countervail not the evil and hazard of a Suit, but ought to be a matter of Patience and Forgiveness, and so be quietly put up without recourse to it. In judging of this smallness, we must not estimate by our own Pride and Passions; but by the reality of things; and the Judgment of indifferent, humble, and dispassionate Persons. This is true, not only in case of injuries to our own selves, but also in case of Trust, when we have the charge of others. 2. Suits are sinful when they are carried on by a sinful Management: As they are, when they make us transgress any of those Duties towards our Adversaries, which oblige us towards all Persons. To avoid all these in Suing, is an hard Point: So we must be slow in coming to it, and very circumspect when we are forced upon it. The Answer to this hindrance summ'd up,

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*A Seventh Hindrance is, because others are not in Charity with them, so that they are afraid they want that Peace which is required to it. As for other mens uncharitableness, it is their sin, and so unfits them; but not being ours, it unfits not us for Receiving. If that ought to exclude any from the Sacrament, it had excluded Christ and his Apostles, and the Primitive Christians, since none had ever such implacable Enemies as they had. Care to be taken that their Enmity be not continued through our Fault; so that if we have given just occasion, we must endeavour a Reconciliation; and if we gave none, be careful not to hate them again. An Eighth Hindrance is, because 'tis a Presumption in us to come to it, and therefore an humble man ought in all modesty to abstain from it. But, 1. 'Tis no Presumption to come when we are called, and to do what we are bidden. 2. 'Tis a very great Presumption to stay away, and leave it undone. 3. If the height of Priviledge and Honour in it be sufficient to make an humble man refuse the Communion; it will*

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will also carry him to renounce the whole Christian Profession. A Ninth Hindrance is, because many good People are seldom or never seen at it, so that they have good Company, and may be good too, if they abstain from it. But, 1. In inquiring after our own Duty, we are not to ask whether others practise it, but whether Christ has any where enjoin'd it. 2. If any good People keep from the Sacrament, that is no part of their Goodness, so that therein they are not to be imitated. 3. Tho' they might be acceptably Good, whilst through innocent Scruples and honest Ignorance they were afraid to come to it: yet will it be a very great Fault even in them to Neglect it after they are better informed, which will not be forgiven, but upon their Amendment of it,

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hinder



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hinder them from joyning in it. For if it be a sufficient Hindrance, it had equally hindered our Saviour Christ, and the Primitive Christians. It ought not only to hinder us from the Communion, but also from being Members of the Christian Church and Profession; but 'tis plainly of no force for either of them, since one man shall not bear anothers, but every man his own Burden. 3. If still any are really offended at the Communion of the Wicked, upon complaint made in the Congregation they are to be suspended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament. An Eleventh Hindrance is the Gesture of Kneeling, which is required to it. When any are absent upon this account, there is no excuse from it. Three things insisted on to prevent their being hindered by it. 1. Kneeling is no unsuitable Posture in receiving, so that if we were left at Liberty, we might have enough to justify our selves in making use of it. 2. It is appointed by our Governours, whom God Commands us to obey in all lawful things; so that every Good man ought to observe it. But if it neither had Authority to injoyne, nor Reason to recommend it, but another Posture might be better used: Yet, 3. Since it may lawfully, though not so well, be used too, for the Sacraments sake, which

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which is not otherwise to be had, we should at least comply with it. No Hindrance to this Compliance, because the Gesture of Kneeling is different from what our Saviour used. For so is sitting too, and therefore they and we are equally concerned to answer it. The Posture he used was no part of the Institution, so that the Institution is not broken when the Posture is altered. Neither it, nor any other, has any Command of God for it; so that none is necessary, but all are still indifferent. When a Posture, different from that at the first Institution, was introduced in Sacraments, our Saviour himself, and they to have submitted to it. Again, no hindrance to it from the fear of Worshipping the Bread, or it being a Popish Rite. A Conclusion of this Point,

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A N

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A N  
H E L P  
A N D  
EXHORTATION  
T O  
Worthy Communicating.

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The INTRODUCTION.

**I**N this matter of the Holy Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, there are two great Faults which are every where incurr'd, and which all that Love their Saviour or their own Souls, ought most carefully to avoid ; and they are, a *Refusal* or *Neglect*, and an *unworthy Usage* or *Prophanation* of it ; both which are most offensive to Almighty God, and to our dear Lord. For our blessed Saviour has appointed it, and expressly commanded us to come to it, and shew'd us by manifest Tokens

kens that he lays a particular weight upon it, so that we are greatly undutiful and disobedient if we keep back from it: And he has appointed it for sacred Ends and solemn Purposes, which call for a very Reverent and Devout Carriage; so that we prophane it if we come carelessly, and behave our selves unworthily when we approach thereto. It is a most necessary part of our Religion, and therefore not to be passed over, and let alone through Negligence: and a most awful one, and therefore not to be perform'd with disrespect, and an irreverent Carriage. So that we must be careful, both to partake of this Holy Feast when we are called to it, and to come to it worthily when we do. And this St. Paul prescribes concerning it, 1 Cor. 11. *Let a man examine himself, says he, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* v. 28. *Let a man examine himself,* *i. e.* let him approve himself, as the † word here rendered *examine* signifies, v. † 19, & Chap. 18. v. \* 3. let him so long try his fitness for it, till he see cause to like and approve himself, and think he is worthy of it; for he would not call unworthy Receivers to the Sacrament, but

† δοκιμαζέτω.  
† οἱ δοκιμασθῶντες,  
they that are ap-  
proved may be made  
manifest.  
\* ὅς ἐστιν δοκιμα-  
σθῆς,  
whomsoever you  
shall approve.

but drive them from it, as he doth by telling them the *extream danger* of it, v. 27, 29. But when once he is so approved, and fit to come to it, then, says he, let him not forbear the Feast, but hasten to Partake of it; *Let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*

Thus are both a *careless Forbearance*, and an *indecent unworthy Usage* of this Holy Feast, great Indignities to our Blessed Lord, and criminal Violations of it. It suffers on either hand, so that to secure it in its just esteem and due observance, both are carefully to be removed. And to do what Right I can to this Holy Ordinance, and what Service I am able to all such as shall seek Help from this Treatise, I shall endeavour, what in me lies, to cure, or prevent both, in that which follows.

Now to do this with the greater clearness, in Discoursing upon this Subject I shall do these five things.

1st, I shall shew *What is the meaning of eating Bread and drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament.*

2ly, *Wherein lies the worthiness of doing it.*

3ly, *How much it is every good Christians Duty to frequent it.*

4ly, *What great Inducements we have to it,*

*it, and how great the Benefits are that come by it, which should make us press to it of our selves, though it were not commanded.*

*sly, I shall consider those Excuses, and take off those Pleas, which are most usually made against it.*

And when all this is done, I think I shall have said enough, both to invite, and Press men to this Feast, and also to a worthy partaking of it, that so they may come to it when they are invited, and be Welcom and Worthy Guests when they do.

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## PART I.

### *The meaning of Feasting in the Sacrament.*

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#### CHAP. I.

*Of the meaning of our eating and  
drinking in the Sacrament.*

#### The Contents.

*Three ends of Feasting in the Lords Supper.*

1. *End is in Remembrance and Commemoration of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us. To remember him is not barely to call to mind that once there was such a Person, but to think of his particular Quality and Relations to us, which are worth remembering, as of his being our most Faithful Teacher, our most gracious Governour, our most entire Friend, and noble Benefactor. These things usually commemorated by Festivals.* 2. *End is in confir-*



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confirmation of the New Covenant which his Death purchased for us. An account of the New Covenant. Christs Death purchased it. It is ratified in the Holy Sacrament, which is shown from the same thing being done in Baptism, Circumcision, and the Passover which answered to it: more particularly, 1. From the Words of Institution, wherein the Cup is call'd the New Covenant, and we are bid to drink of it, which was a Covenant Rite; and the Bread Christs Body, to the same intent as the Paschal Lamb was, which was a Federal Conveyance of it. 2. From its being a Feast on Sacrifice, for Sacrifice is one way of Covenanting with God, and by Feasting on it we partake of it. 3. From its conveying the particular Blessings of the New Covenant, which otherwise than by Federal Promises, or performances are not to be had. 3. End is in Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship with those Brethren that Communicate with us, and with all others. This Chapter summ'd up.

**F**irst, I shall shew what is the meaning of eating Bread and drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament, and what we are to understand by them, and think of them, when we do them.

When

When we come to eat Bread and drink Wine in the Holy Sacrament, we must not come only for a Bodily refreshment, or for eating and drinking's sake, as we do to our common Food: For *this is to eat*, as St. Paul says, *not discerning the Lords Body*, but as if it were bare ordinary Meat, 1 Cor. 11. 29. But we must eat and drink with *special ends*, and *particular Intentions*, which may render our eating and drinking, not an ordinary Repast, but a *Religious Feasting* upon the *Body and Blood* of our Lord. And these ends are three.

1st. In *Remembrance and Commemoration* of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us.

2ly, In *Confirmation of the New Covenant*, which his Death procured us.

3ly, In *Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship* with those Brethren that *Communicate with us*, and with all others.

First, We must eat Bread and drink Wine in *Remembrance and Commemoration* of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us. By these Actions we must be put in remembrance and call to mind our selves, and commemorate or tell it out to others, what a good Friend and Saviour Christ has been to us, and how at last he died and gave his own Hearts Blood for our sakes. And this our Blessed Lord expressly ordered at the time of Institution, *This do*,  
says

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says he, both of the *eating Bread*, and *drinking Wine*, in remembrance of me, 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.

To *Remember* one, is not barely to call to mind that once there was *such a Person*; but also to think of their particular *Quality* and *Relation*, what they are to us, or what they have left with us, or what they have done for us which is worth Remembering. If we bid a *Servant* remember us, we intend he should be mindful of the *Commands* which we have left with him; if a *Friend*, that he should bear in mind the great *Love* and *Faithfulness* which we have always expressed towards him; if one we have *highly obliged*, that he should *gratefully resent*, and think of the *kindnesses* which we have done him; or if one, lastly, *whose favour we desire*, and of whom we have requested any thing, that he would be mindful of the *Good turn* which he *promises* to do, or which we *ask* of him. In desiring any of these, or any others to remember us, we mean not barely that they should call to mind how once there were such men as we in being; but, over and above that, that they be particularly mindful of the *Relation* wherein we stand, and think of what we have done, what we deserve, or what we desire or expect from them.

And

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And this our Blessed Lord intends, when in his Holy Feast he Desires, and Commands us to remember him. He would have us think of him in all those Capacities, and reflect upon him under all those Relations, wherein he so infinitely deserves to be remembered by us: Such as are that of a *Faithful Teacher*, a *Gracious Governour*, an *entire Friend* and noble *Benefactor*, doing the highest kindnesses, and working the greatest deliverances for us, and for all *Mankind*.

1<sup>st</sup>, He would have us remember him as our *Faithful Teacher*, who has made known to us the whole Counsel of God concerning us, and to call to mind those excellent things which he has revealed to us. As namely, That for the sake of his Death, and through the merits of his Bloud, all mankind, who were utter Enemies before, shall be put into a way of Reconciliation with God, and have the Benefit of a New Covenant, which proffers Pardon to all that truly Repent, and Spiritual help and inward Grace to all that carefully endeavour with it, and the Blessings of Heaven and Happiness to all that are entirely obedient, promising that at our Death our Souls shall go into Paradise, and at the General Judgment our Bodies, which till then were held in their  
Graves,

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Graves shall be raised up again to eternal Life.

2<sup>ly</sup>. He would have us remember him as our *Gracious Governour*, whom God has anointed to give Laws to us, and to recollect and bear in mind those Commands, which, as our Sovereign Lord and Master, he has laid upon us. As namely, That we love God, and trust in his Goodness, and submit to his Providence, and Worship him with Prayers and Praises, but above all with an holy and a God-like Life; that we be Humble and Heavenly-minded, Chaste, Temperate, and Contented, that we be dutiful to our Governours, respectful to our Superiours, courteous to our Equals, condescensive to our Inferiours, grateful to our Friends, loving and obliging to our Enemies, and just, charitable, and peaceable towards all persons, of whatsoever Nations, Sects, or Parties, even to all Mankind.

3<sup>ly</sup>, He would have us remember him as our *most entire Friend*, and noble *Benefactor*, who let us so deep into his Heart, and heaped his Favours on us at so prodigious a rate, as never was, nor ever will be equall'd. For he loved us without any thing of our own Deserts; and in spite of our highest Provocations; and

and without expecting any other recompence, besides the pleasure of being kind to us; and to such a degree, as made him forego the greatest pleasures which he might have held without all interruption in Heavenly places, and become a man of Sorrows, and lead a persecuted, difficult, and necessitous Life, and at last die a most exquisitely painful, and ignominious Death for our sakes, which ransom'd us from the greatest Curse, and procured us the most valuable Blessings that our Nature can admit of. And this benefit of his Death, being not only in it self the costliest, but the very price and purchase of all the rest, he would have remembered above all others in this Feast; and accordingly he has suited the Food in it to be broken Bread, and Wine poured out, which do most lively represent it. *As often as you eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, saith the Apostle, you exhibit to all that look on and observe it, or shew forth the Lords Death till he come,* 1 Cor. 11. 26.

These are the things, which our Saviour Christ calls us seriously to remember and consider of in our own minds, and which the Actions themselves commemorate and shew forth to others, when we  
eat

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eat Bread and drink Wine in this holy Sacrament. When we partake of this Feast, which he has appointed us, he would have us remember him, and think with our selves how *Faithful a Teacher* he was to us, and what good Lessons and Declarations he has left with us; how *Gracious a Lord* and Master he proved, and what Commandments he has laid upon us; and lastly, how *kind a Friend*, and *noble Benefactor* he shewed himself, and what astonishing kindnesse he has done for us in all the Labours of his Life, but especially and above all in his suffering a bloody Death for our sakes, which purchased us the Forgiveness of our Sins, the Grace and Spirit of God, and Eternal happiness. All this *Faithfull Teacher*, and *Gracious Governour*, and *entire Friend*, and *noble Benefactor* Christ is to us in the highest Measures, and to all imaginable Degrees; and since he is so, he would have us to bear it in mind, and oftentimes to think of it. And that we may be sure to do it, he has instituted this Feast on purpose for it, and told us that our work is to call to mind and remember him whensoever we come to it.

And this way of having these things remembred, by appointing Feasts for the  
Com-

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Commemoration of them, has been very usual in the World. Thus the † *Disciples*, in the several *Sects of Philosophers* at *Athens*, were wont to have a set Feast and Col-lation in remembrance of their Founders. And it has been the way of all the World to remember their Benefactors, and

comemorate some great Blessings, by *Festivals*. Thus at this day we com- memorate the delive- rance from the *Powder- Treason*, and the *Kings* happy *Restoration*, by a yearly Festival upon that

occasion. And the whole *Christian Church* has perpetuated the memory of *Christs* *Nativity*, *Resurrection*, and the *Descent of the Holy Ghost*, by the yearly Feasts of *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Pentecost*. And God himself in the Old Testament call'd men to a remembrance of the *Creation of the World* by the Feast of the *Seventh day Sabbath*; and all the *Jews* to the commemoration of his sparing all their *First-Born*, when the destroying Angel *slaw all the First-Born of Egypt*, by the

† Πολλοὶ γὰρ  
εἰσι φιλοσόφων ἐν  
ᾗσιν συνοδοὶ καὶ  
μεν Διογανιστῶν,  
καὶ δὲ Ἀντιπα-  
τριστῶν λεγομένων,  
τῶν δὲ Πανατι-  
αστῶν. *Athen.*  
*Deipn.* l. 5. c. 1.

*Diogenistæ, Anti-  
patristæ, Panatia-  
stæ appellati sunt,  
qui stato anni Die  
Diogenis, Antipa-  
tri, & Panatii no-  
bilitium Philosopho-  
rum memoriam ce-  
lebrarent. Il. Ca-  
saub. ad loc. Ani-  
madv. c. 1.*



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yearly Festival of the *Passover* appointed for that very purpose, *Exod. 12. 14.*

This then is the first end of our eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Lords Table, it is *in remembrance of our Saviour Christ, and of what he has done for us.* So that when we partake in this Feast of his appointment, we must seriously reflect on him who has appointed it, and bethink our selves that he is our Faithful Teacher, calling to mind his Revelations; our Sovereign Lord and Master, remembring his Commandments; our intire Friend, Saviour, and Benefactor, who has done strange things for us, but above all, who has laid down his own Life to purchase us the Pardon of our Sins, and Spiritual Grace, and Eternal Happiness, upon our Repentance, Obedience, and Virtuous Endeavours. With these Thoughts he would have us entertain our Minds, at the same time we Feast our Bodies with the Creatures of Bread and Wine, which he has prepared for us: and if we would answer his End in it, and be welcome Guests at this Feast, when he calls to it, we must be sure so to do.

And as we must eat Bread and drink Wine at the Lords Table in remembrance of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us; so must we,

2ly, In

2ly. *In Confirmation of the New Covenant, which his Death purchased and procured us.*

This Covenant is a *mutual contract and ingagement between God and us*; and consists of several Articles agreed to on *Gods side*, and several on *ours*. As for *Gods part*, to all *Believers, i. e.* to all that believe the Scriptures, and particularly that part of them, these his promises, without a belief whereof they will have no list or encouragement to set about the performance of the Conditions required on their parts: to all *Believers*, I say, he promises *three Things*, viz. the *forgiveness of Sins*, the *assistance of his Spirit*, and *Eternal Happiness*. And answerably on *their Parts* they promise *three more*, which three indeed are all summ'd up in one, *i. e.* the last of them: and those are, to *Repent of all their Sins*, to *endeavour with his Grace*, and to *obey all his Commandments*.

He promises to *forgive them all their Sins*. For this is one Article of the New Covenant, as the Apostle relates it, *Heb. 8. This is the Covenant I will make with them in those days, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more, v. 10, 12.* But then at the same time he expects, and accordingly they promise that they will *Repent of them, and forsake them*. For he orders *Repentance*

# 14 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

yearly Festival of the *Pasſover* appointed for that very purpose, *Exod. 12. 14.*

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And as we must eat Bread and drink Wine at the Lords Table in remembrance of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us; so must we,

2ly, *In*

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He promises to *forgive them all their Sins.* For this is one Article of the New Covenant, as the Apostle relates it, *Heb. 8. This is the Covenant I will make with them in those days, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more, v. 10, 12.* But then at the same time he expects, and accordingly they promise that they will *Repent of them, and forsake them.* For he orders *Repentance*

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and *Remission of Sins* to be preached both together, *Luc. 24.* That *Repentance and Remission of Sins* should be preached in his *Name to all Nations*, v. 47; and tells us expressly, That *except we repent, we shall all perish*, *Luc. 13, 3.*

He promises them the assistance of his Spirit to enable them to do his Will, and become obedient. For this also is reckoned as another Article of the *Covenant made with Abraham*, that he would grant unto us the Power to serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the days of our Lives, *Luc. 1. 72, 73, 74, 75*: and the great Promise of the Gospel is, that God will give his Holy Spirit to those that ask him, *Luc. 11 13.* But then he expects, and accordingly they promise, that they will use and improve his Grace whensoever it is intrusted with them, and endeavour after all Virtues as they stand in need of them. God works in us both to will and to do, says St. Paul, when we joyn with him, and work out our own Salvation, *Phil. 2. 12, 13*: and 'tis only to him that bath, saith our Saviour, i.e. to him that hath improved the Talents bestowed on him, as those Good Servants

had done, who had gain'd the  
 † v. 20. one † five, the other \* two  
 \* v. 22. Talents with them, that more  
 shall be given, and he shall have  
 abundantly

abundance ; but from him that hath not, i.e. hath not improved what he received, as the wicked Servant had not done, who went and † hid it † v. 25. shall be taken away even that which he hath, Mat. 25. 29. And that this is Gods ordinary Rule where he intrusts any thing, he expressly declares again upon another occasion, Luc. 19. 26.

He promises them, lastly, *Eternal Life and Happiness*. This, says St. John, is the Promise which he hath promised us, even *Eternal Life*, 1 John 2. 25. But then he expects, and at the same time we promise, that we will obey all his Laws, and do every thing which he requires of us. For *Christ is become the Author of Eternal Salvation*, says the Apostle, to those only that obey him, Heb. 5. 9: and *blessed are they that do his Commandments*, says St. John, for they only have Right to the Tree of Life, Rev. 22. 14.

So that the *New Covenant* is a mutual Contract and Ingagement between God and Men, wherein he promises to all that Believe, and accordingly they accept it, that he will forgive them their Sins when they Repent of them, and help them to any Graces when they concur with him and endeavour after them, and give them *Eternal Life* after they have intirely obeyed him.

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He promises Pardon, Inward Grace, and Everlasting Happiness; but then they, having Faith or Belief already, without an actual Exercise whereof they would not seek after this Covenant, nor, if they did, could be admitted to it, make Promise to him again of Repentance, Virtuous Endeavours, and an intire Obedience, which must confer a Claim, and give them Right thereto.

This is the New Covenant, and this Christs Bloody Death has purchased and procured for us. God would not dispense with the *First* Covenant without a Ransome that might remove all Hindrances, by securing the Honour of his Holiness, and utterly discouraging all future offences, and satisfying all the ends of Justice: and because that could not otherwise be so well effected, as he thought fit it should, Christ himself became an *expiatory Sacrifice*, and, by dying for it, obtained the *Second*. And for this Cause it is called the New Covenant in his Blood, *i. e.* that Covenant which was confirmed and purchased by it. *This*, says he, *is the New Testament* or rather, the

† *Kαὶνὸν δια-  
θήκη*

*New † Covenant in my  
Blood, 1 Cor. 11. 25.*

Now this Covenant, which is the purchase of Christs Death, and which is the

the Sum and Substance of all that he has got for us, we all entred into at first when we were *Baptized*. For *Baptism* is our *Sealing of this Covenant*, and *stipulating* or engaging to make good these Terms to Almighty God ;

*Baptism*, says St. \* *Peter*, \* 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. is the *Answer*, or † *Stipulation* † *ἐμπόνημα*.  
*of a good Conscience*

*towards God*; i. e. it is the *Federal Promise*, or *undertaking* of it, which every Person makes when he is Baptized. And this is plain from that *form of the Baptismal Vow* which the *Primitive Christians* used, and which we use now at present, wherein, if they are *grown Persons*, they *themselves*, or if *Children*, their *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* in their Names do expressly covenant and ingage for that *Faith*, *Repentance*, or *Renouncing* of all Sins, and *Obedience* to Gods Laws, which are required by it.

And as we *first entred* into this *Covenant* when we were *Baptized*; so are we called to *renew and confirm* it every time we are invited to *sup* with our Lord In this *Holy Sacrament*. When he *Summons* us to eat Bread, and drink Wine in remembrance of his *Death* at this *Feast*; he calls us withal to confirm this *New Covenant*, which his *Death* procured,



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and which was the price and purchase of it. He invites us to receive ingagements from God of his promised Mercies, and to give him engagements of our Duty and Service: to be assured by him, that, if we do *believe* the Scriptures, he will *forgive* us our Sins upon our *repentance*, and give his *Grace* and *Spirit* to our *endeavours*, and make us *eternally happy* upon our *obedience*; and to assure him, that we do so *believe*, and are resolv'd so to *repent*, *endeavour*, and *obey*, that so by virtue of his Gracious Promise we may have Right thereto. He intends our eating and drinking at his Table as a *Federal Rite*, and for a Renewal and Ratification of this League of Love and Friendship: So that at the same time we eat and drink in remembrance of Christs Death which procured the Covenant, we must solemnly give our Consent to it, and expressly ratifie and confirm it too.

This may fairly be presumed to be one End of the Holy Communion, because it is the End of *Baptism*, which St.

*Peter* calls a † *Stipulation*,

† 1 Pet. 3. 21. and which, as we have seen, is our entrance into the *Gospel-Covenant* and *Religion*. And since it is so evidently the use of that, in great likeli-

likelihood it is of this too ; for both the Sacraments were still held of *Use, Nature, and Signification.*

Nay, this was the End, not only of the *Christian*, but also of the *Jewish Sacraments* which shews it was not peculiar to any one, but runs through all of them.

For as for *Circumcision*, it was a Federal Rite or Sign. It bound the *Jews* (as before it had done the *Patriarchs*) to God, and God to them, in the *Covenant Moses* gave them, by a mutual obligation. For therein they promised to perform all that the *Law* enjoined--- *He that is Circumcised*, says *St. Paul*, *is a Debtor to keep the whole Law*, Gal. 5. 3. And thereby they were assured of the *Righteousness* and *Benefits* God had promised--- *Abraham received Circumcision as a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*, says the same Apostle, *i. e.* as a Seal or Confirmation of the Promises made to it, *Rom. 4. 11.* And because it was thus a Sign to both parts, and a Rite used at their engaging in it, *Circumcision* is call'd the *Covenant*, *i. e.* the Solemn Ceremony and undertaking of it, *Gen. 17. 10. A. 7. 8.*

And then as for the *Passover*, it also was a *Covenanting Ceremony* and *Federal Rite*, as may sufficiently appear from its being a *Feast on Sacrifice*, which is the most So-

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lemn way of *Covenanting* with God. And this use of the *Passover* is of the greater weight to conclude the same of the *Lords Supper*, because among us this answers to it, and comes instead of it. It answers to it, I say; for our *bleeding Lord* was the Great thing which their *Sacrificed Lamb* signified, whence he is called

† 1 Pet. 1. 19. the † *Lamb without blemish*

\* Rev. 13. 8. and without Spot, the \* *Lamb slain from the Foundation of*

† Joh. 1. 29' the *World*, and the † *Lamb of God that takes away the sins of*

*Mankind*: and our *Feasting* upon his *Body* and *Blood* is the same with their *Feasting upon it*, as St. Paul plainly intimates, when he says *Christ our Passover is Sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep our Eucharistical Feast upon him in it*, answerable to what they did upon the *Lamb* in theirs, 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. And at the Institution of the Holy Sacrament, our Saviour intimated that the *Passover* was abolish'd, and that this was henceforward to succeed and come instead of it. For immediately before he appointed his own *Supper*, he tells them he would not any more eat of the *Lamb*, or drink of the *Wine* in the *Passover*; i. e. he would abolish this, so as we should no more eat or drink of it; and substitute that in place of it, Luc. 22. 16, 18.

And

And now since 'tis the general Nature of Sacraments, both among Jews and Christians, to be Covenanting Rites; since Baptism plainly is, that goes hand in hand with it; and since the Passover was, which preceded and answered to it, this being substituted in place, and put instead of it: in all likelihood the Sacrament of the Lords Supper is a Federal Feast and a Covenanting Rite too.

But to prove this yet more particularly, That this Holy Sacrament is intended for a Federal Rite, and for our Renewal and Ratification of the New Covenant, will appear,

1st, From the words of Institution, wherein the Cup is call'd the New Covenant, and we are bid to drink of it, which is a Federal Rite; and the Bread is call'd Christs Body to the same intent as the Paschal Lamb was, which was a Federal Conveyance of it.

2ly, From its being a Feast upon Sacrifice, which is a Federal Feast; for Sacrifice is one way of Covenanting with God, and by Feasting on the Sacrifice we joyn in, and partake of it.

3ly, From all the particular Blessings of the Covenant being conveyed by it, which otherwise than by Federal Promises or Performances are not to be had.

1st, That our eating Bread and drink-  
ing

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*ing Wine* in the Holy Sacrament, is intended for a *Federal Rite*, and for our Renewal and Ratification of the New Covenant, appears from the words of *Institution*, wherein the *Cup* is called the *New Covenant*, and we are bid to drink of it, which is a *Covenanting Rite*; and the *Bread* is call'd *Christs Body* to the same intent as the *Paschal Lamb* was, which also was a *Federal Conveyance* of it.

1. In the words of *Institution* the *Cup* is called the *New Covenant*. This *Cup*, says our Saviour, is the *New*  
† διαθήκη. *Testament*, or † *Covenant*, in my Blood, 1 Cor. 11. 25.

And we are all bid to drink of it, which is a *Federal Rite*, and was then a known Ceremony of confirming any Covenant. Drink ye all of it, says he to his Disciples, Mat. 26. 27.

This drinking of it, as it is an Application of it to our selves, and taking it into our own Bodies, is a plain Sign of our ingaging in it, and adhering to it; for thereby we shew that we close with, and embrace it. But this is still further evident, because anciently among the *Jews*, and other *Eastern Nations*, eating and drinking were *Federal Rites*, whereby they were wont mutually to Seal Leagues of friendship, and confirm Co-  
venants

*venants* with each other. For they used to bind their Compacts by a *Friendly Treat*, and to consummate them in an *Hospitable Entertainment*. Thus we read in the Story of *Laban* and *Jacob*: for when *Laban* demands, *Come thou, let us make a Covenant, I and thou*; Gen. 31. 44. *Jacob's* Consent to it is expressed by this, — *he said unto his Brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap, and did eat there upon the heap*; by that Note of Friendship answering the Demand, and confirming the Covenant which was proposed, v. 46. And so *Joshua's* *Covenanting*, or *making Peace* with the *Gibbeonites* when they came to sue for it, is called his *taking of their victuals*, Josh. 9. — the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel of the Lord, and *Joshua made Peace with them, and made a League with them to let them live*, Josh. 9. 14, 15. And *Obadiah* mentions *being in Covenant* with any one, and *Eating Bread* with him, as Words that signify the same Thing, whereof the one is the others Explication. *The men of thy Confederacy have brought thee even to the border*, says he, i.e. have almost quite bereft thee of thy own Country; *the men that are at Peace with thee, have deceived thee; they that eat thy Bread, have laid a Wound under thee*: in which

Description

## 26 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

Description of the Enemies of *Edom*, tho' there be Variety in the Expression, yet 'tis one and the same Thing meant by them, *Obad. v. 7.* And the same might appear from other Instances, both in the *Scriptures*, and in *Prophane Authors*.

Since in the Words of Institution then our Saviour tells his Disciples, the *Cup* is the *New Covenant*, and bids them *drink* of it, which was well known among them to be a *Federal Rite*; he plainly shew'd his meaning was, that they should *ratifie* and *confirm* the *New Covenant* by it.

2. In the Words of Institution the *Bread* is called *Christs Body* to the same intent, as the *Paschal Lamb* was in the *Jewish Sacrament*: and this also shews it to be a *Covenanting Rite*, because that was a *Federal Conveyance* of it.

The *Bread*, I say, or rather the *taking* and *eating* of it, is called *Christs Body* to the same intent, as the *Paschal Lamb* was in the *Jewish Sacrament*. *Jesus took bread*, says *St. Matthew*, and *brake* it, and said,

\* *Not ἐτοσ* in the masculine, to agree with *ἡ ἐσθλα* bread; but *ἐτοσ*, which, being of a different gender, cannot agree to *ἄρτον*, but to the whole Action.

*Take, eat, \* this is my Body*, *Mat. 26. 26.* Which Words, *This is my Body*, relate to the *Paschal Lamb*, that in the ordinary Phrase of the Doctors was called the

† *Body*

Chap. I. *in the Sacrament.* 27

† *Body of the Passover,*  
and *the Body of the Pas-*  
*chal Lamb,* to shew,  
that the *taking and eat-*  
*ing* of the *Bread* and

† *Corpus Pascha-*  
*tis, & Corpus Ag-*  
*ni Paschalis.* *ut*  
*Bux. observ. e Tul-*  
*mund. & Maim.*

*Wine* was to be *his Body* in the same sence  
now, as the *eating of the Paschal Lamb*  
had been hitherto. Which Relation to  
the *Passover* that he had then in hand,  
and to their manner of expressing it, I  
think is one very obvious and natural  
Account of his calling this *New Feast his*  
*Body* when he spake of it.

And this also shews it to be a *Covenant-*  
*Rite*, because the *eating the Paschal*  
*Lamb* among the *Jews* was *his Body* in a  
*Federal* sence, as a *Federal Conveyance* of  
it. For their *Slain Lamb* was a Figure  
of our *Dying Lord*, as hath been proved,  
and was accepted to all the purposes of  
his *Bloud*: and their *Feasting on it*, as in  
all other *Sacrifices*, was their *Federal joyn-*  
*ing* in, and partaking of it. For to *Feast*  
*on a Sacrifice*, was to joyn in the *Covenant*  
made by it, and to partake of the *Bles-*  
*sings* promised to it, as shall presently be  
shewed.

And since in the Words of Institution  
our Saviour says of the *Eating of the*  
*Bread* that it is *his Body*, to the same in-  
tent as the *Eating of the Paschal Lamb* was  
in



## 28 *The meaning of Feasting Part I.*

in that Jewish Sacrament, which was so in a *Federal* sence, as a *Federal Conveyance* of it: he plainly intimates his own Supper to be a *Federal Feast*, and that we confirm the *New Covenant* by joyning in it.

And as this appears from the Words of Institution, wherein the *Cup* is called the *New Covenant*, and they are bid to *eat* and *drink*, which is a *Federal Rite*; and the *Eating of the Bread* is called *Christs Body* to the same intent as the *Paschal Lamb* was, which was so in a *Federal* sence, as it *Federally conveyed* it: So doth it also,

2ly, From its being a *Feast upon Sacrifice*, which is a *Federal Feast*; for *Sacrifice* is one way of *Covenanting with God*; and by *Feasting on the Sacrifice*, we joyne in, and partake of it.

The *Lords Supper*, I say, is a *Feast upon Sacrifice*. It was the way both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that when they brought an Offering to God, they who offered it were to come, and Feast on some part of it. Thus it was in the *Worship* of the *Golden Calf*, and the *Sacrifice* which *Aaron* made to it, *Exod. 32. He built an Altar before it, and offered Burnt-offerings and Peace-offerings, and the People sate down to Eat and to drink, i.e. upon part of what they*

they had offered, v. 5, 6. And thus it was in the *Sacrifice* which *Samuel* blessed, 1 Sam. 9. *The people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the Sacrifice, and afterwards they eat that he bidden*, v. 13. And to this Usage several Places of the *Scripture* allude, as namely, *Psal.* 106. 28. — *they joyned themselves unto Baal-Peor, and ate the Sacrifices of the Dead: And Exod.* 34. 15, — *lest thou do Sacrifice, unto their Gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his Sacrifice: And several others.* And as it was thus in the *Religious Feasts* both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, so it is also in the *Lords Supper*. Our Saviour gave his Body and Blood a *Sacrifice* for our Sins, putting away sin, as the *Apostle* says, *by the Sacrifice of himself*, Heb. 9. 26. And having thus made the *Oblation*, according to what was in use both in the *Jewish* and *Gentile* *Sacrifices*, he institutes this *Treat of Bread and Wine*, as a *Feast* upon it. This I suppose is aim'd at, when *St. Paul* brings in an *Altar* speaking of the *Christian Feast*, which sufficiently intimates its relation to a *Sacrifice*, as a *Treat* upon it: *We have an Altar*, says he, *whereof they have no right to eat that serve the Tabernacle, i.e.* wherein the strict *Judaizers* may not partake; for *Judaism* excludes Men from the *Communion* especially,  
and

30 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

and indeed from all Parts of the Christian Worship, *Hcb. 13. 10.* And this he also shews concerning it, when he compares it with the *Jewish and Gentile Feasts on Sacrifices*, making them answerable and parallel to it, *1 Cor. 10. 16, 18, 20, 21.* And this he directly affirms of it, when he says, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the Eucharistical Feast, i. e. upon this Sacrificed Christ, 1 Cor. 5, 7, 8.*

And *Feasts upon Sacrifice* are *Federal Feasts, i. e.* Feasts that ratifie and confirm Covenants; for *Sacrifice* is *one way of Covenanting with God*, and *Feasting upon it* is the way of *participating or sharing in it.*

*Sacrifice*, I say, is *one way of Covenanting with God.* When God would enter into Articles, and bind himself in Covenant with Men, he chose to do it in shedding the *Bloud of some Sacrifice*, that Typified the *Bloud of Christ his Son*, which is the only thing that moves him to deal with us in any concern, that either implies, or tends to Friendship and Reconciliation. Thus he did with *Abraham*, when he promised him the Land of *Canaan* if he would continue

† *Gen. 17.*  
1, 2.

† *perfect, and walk before him;*  
he ordered him to make a *Sacrifice*, that therein he might  
Covenant

Chap. I. *in the Sacrament.* 31

Covenant and engage it to him. *Tale an Heifer, says he, and a She-Goat, and a Ram, &c. And Abraham took them, and divided them in the midst, and when the Sun went down, behold a smoaking Furnace, and a burning Lamp that passed between those pieces, wherein, 'tis like, God consumed and Feasted on Abraham's Sacrifice; and in that same day the Lord made a Covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy Seed have I given this Land, &c. Gen. 15. 8, 9, 10, 17, 18.* And thus he did with the Jewish Nation, when he ratified that Covenant with them, which Moses gave them; he chose the *Bloud of Burnt-offerings*, that therein he might seal it to them. For when Moses told the people all the words of the Lord, and they answered with one voice, saying, *We will do them*; he built an Altar of twelve Pillars, according to the twelve Tribes, and offered *Burnt-offerings and Peace-offerings*, and then recited the Book of the Covenant in their ears, that they might give their Assent to it in the Solemnity of this Sacrifice; the Bloud whereof is therefore called *the Bloud of the Covenant*, because it was thus solemnly entred, and established by it, *Exod. 24. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.* And thus he did in other Compacts, but particularly in all those wherein he promised Pardon of sin; for without shedding  
of

### 32 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

of blood, *i. e.* of some Sacrifice, says the Apostle, *there is no Remission*, Heb. 9. 22. Thus did God, in all *Contracts of Pardon* and *Reconciliation*, require the blood of some *Sacrifice*, that therein he might ratify and confirm them. And this was the great Use whereto all *Sacrifices of Expiation* (such as our *Saviour Christs* is in most signal manner, whereon we *Feast* in the *Lords Supper*) served among the *Jews*: they were *solemn Compacts and Stipulations*, wherein he promised pardon, and they *Amendment*, after any Offences. He engaged to accept the life of the sacrificed beast in lieu of theirs, and to exempt them because it had suffered; and they engaged to amend the fault which they sought to have atoned, and never more to repeat it. This 'tis plain they did, from that *Form of Penitential Confession* in use among them, when they brought an *Expiatory*

*Sacrifice* to the Lord:

† Obsecro Domine, peccavi, deliqui, rebellavi, hoc aut illud feci, nunc autem penitentiam ago, sitque hæc hostia expiatio mea. Vi. Episcop. Instit. l. 3. c. 3. ad Præp. 35. & Outr. de Sacr. c.

† O Lord! I have sinned, and dealt wickedly, and rebelled against thee in doing this or that; now I am sorry for it, and shamed of it, and will never more return to it; and therefore beg this Sacrifice may atone for it. And if

they had not thus repented of it, the † Sacrifice would † *Isa. 66. 3.* have been of no avail to the Forgiveness of it. For, *to what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord,* so long as you shew no Repentance with them? But wash you, make you clean, cease to do evil, learn to do well: Come now, and let us reason together; tho' your Sins be as Scarlet they shall be as white as Snow, *Isa. 1. 11, 16, 17, 18.* The Sacrifice of God, says the Psalmist, are a broken Spirit, *i. e.* they must be offered and presented with it; a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, thou wilt not despise, *Pf. 51. 17.*

Thus were Sacrifices a mutual Stipulation and Engagement, consisting of a promise of Pardon on Gods part, and a promise of Repentance and Amendment on Mans: so that they were in the nature of a virtual Contract and Covenant between them. And this God plainly intimates concerning them, when he tells of his Saints making a Covenant with him by Sacrifice: -----*Gather my Saints, saith he, who have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice, Pf. 50. 5.* and calls Salt, wherewith every Oblation of Meat-offering was to be seasoned, the Salt of the Covenant, because it was to season all those Sacrifices wherein the Covenant

### 34 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

Covenant was confirmed, *Levit. 2. 13.*

And as *Sacrifice* is one way of *Covenanting with God*, so is *Feasting upon it* the way of *sharing and partaking in it*. He who joyned in the Feast, was looked upon by God himself to joyn also in the Offering, to *promise* all the *Duty* which it engaged, and to *partake* in all the  *blessings* which it procured for them. *They which eat of the Sacrifices*, says *St. Paul*, are *partakers of the Altar*, *1 Cor. 10. 18.* And therefore he forbids them to joyn in the *Gentile Feasts*, where they *sacrificed to Devils*, because that were to *partake* and *have fellowship with Devils*, *v. 20, 21.*

And thus, from this also. viz. the *Lords Supper being a Feast on Sacrifice*, it appears to be a *Federal Rite*, because *Sacrifice is the great way of Covenanting with God*, and by *Feasting on it*, we joyn in and *partake of it*. In *eating Bread and drinking Wine* at the *Lords Table*, agreeably to what the *Jews and Gentiles* did at their *Religious Feasts*, we feed on the *Sacrifice of Christ*; and that *Sacrifice* confirmed the *New Covenant* with *Almighty God*, that being, as he says, sealed  
† *1 Cor. 11. 25.* † *in his blood*, so that by our *Feasting on it* we are made to *share in it*, and give our full *Consent thereto*.

3ly, That

3ly, That our Eating and Drinking at the Lord's Table is a Covenant Rite, appears from *all the particular blessings of the Covenant being conveyed by it*, which otherwise than by *Federal Promises and Performances* are not to be had.

The *particular Blessings* promised in the Covenant, I say, are all *conveyed by it*. Our Saviour tells us of the *Bread* we eat, and of the *Wine* we drink, that they are his *Body* and *Bloud*: --- *This is my Body*, says he, and *this is my Bloud of the New Testament*, Mat. 26. 26, 28. By which, altho' we are not to understand that they are so in their *Natures*, yet the least we can understand is, that they are so in their *Effects*, *i. e.* that they convey to us all those Blessings, which the piercing of his Body, and the shedding of his Bloud procured for us. Those Blessing are contained in the New Covenant, and, as I said, are chiefly these *three, viz.* the *Forgiveness of Sins*, the *Assistance of Gods Spirit* to aid and strengthen us, and *Eternal Life* and Happiness: and all these the Eating of Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Sacrament are designed to convey to us.

They convey to us *Forgiveness of Sins*, and assure us, when we perform them as we ought, that God is in Favour and at  
Peace



36 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

Peace with us. Of this we have sufficient Assurance, because we *Feast upon a Sacrifice*, which is Gods Meat, and are entertained at his own Table, as *his Guests* whom he has invited: and the least which that can mean is, that he admits us into a State of Love and Friendliness, since we do not invite those we will not be Friends with to our own Tables. When any one calls another to a Treat, it is a plain Sign he either *would be*, or *is*, or at least *makes show of being* reconciled. It is a most Natural Sign, and *now* every where *is*, and *always was* a Note of Friendship and Endearment. And as such the Scriptures are wont to speak of it. When those whom he *had shut out*, should knock at the door to be let in, and claim Acquaintance; our Saviour tells us, they will say to him, *We have eaten and drunk in thy presence*, Luc. 13. 25, 26. And when he shews his *Apostles* how high Favour, and what great interest they shall have with him, he tells them, they shall *eat and drink at his Table in his Kingdom*, Luc. 22. 29, 30. And when he declares how kind he will be to those *that hear his voice*, and *open unto him*, he says, *he will come in and sup with them, and they with him*, Rev. 3. 20. So that when God entertains us at his own Table, and invites us  
to

to feast with him, as he doth in the Holy Communion; we may be sure, if we come worthily as we ought, he is in Friendship with us, and our Sins are forgiven. And this our Savionr plainly intimates, when he tells us at the giving of the Cup, that it is † *his Blood*

*shed for the remission of sins,* † Mat 26. 28. and bids us \* *drink of it,* \* verse 27.

that so we may have it in our selves, and be assured we have received the Attonement. And this we must observe, is a Privilege which God never vouchsafed to the *Jews*, no not to the *Priests* themselves: for in all their *Sacrifices* he would never give them the *Blood of Expiation*, to assure them of their Sins being atoned by it, (nay, nor the *Flesh* neither in the *Great Sacrifice of Expiation*, which was burnt \* *without the Camp*) but ordered \* Lev. 16. 27. it always to be poured out Heb. 13. 11. *upon the Altar, or the Ground,*

Exod. 29. 12. Lev. 4. 25, 30, 34. And to this, 'tis like, St. Paul may have respect, when he tells the *Hebrews*, *We have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat, who serve the Tabernacle,* Heb. 13. 10, 11.

They convey to us also the *Assistance of Gods Spirit and Grace to aid and strengthen us.* This is intimated by our Savi-

D our

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our Christ, when he calls his *Flesh*, which all must eat (*i. e.* not in its *Natural Substance*, but in its *Effects*, or those Blessings which were purchased by it) by the

Name of *Bread*, which is a  
 \* Ps. 104. 15. thing that, as the \* Psalmist says, *Strengthens mans*

*heart*, and gives Nourishment and Support to us. *I am the living Bread*, says he, *which came down from Heaven: If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever; and the Bread which I will give, is my Flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World*, Joh. 6. 51. In the Sacrament we are called to eat *Christs Flesh*, and drink his Blood, (not in their *Natural Substances*, as I have hinted, but in their *Effects*: ) and he that eateth my *Flesh*, and drinketh my *Blood*, saith he, *dwelleth in me, and I in him*; and when Christ dwells in any Man, his Spirit dwells there too, so that he cannot want Grace sufficient to assist him, Joh. 6. 56. And St. Paul alluding to the Power of Wine, whose *Natural Virtue* is to enspirit and enliven Men, says, *That in the Eucharist we are all made to drink into one Spirit, i. e.* we are all made to share in the same Holy Spirit, which is the same to our Souls that a Draught of Wine is to our Bodies, a Principle of New Life, Strength, and Vigour in us, 1 Cor. 12. 13.

They

which  
al Sub-  
e Bles-  
by the  
ich is a  
\* Psal-  
ns mans  
upport  
ays he,  
any man  
er; and  
y Flesh,  
World,  
are cal-  
s Blood,  
s I have  
l he that  
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t Grace  
6. And  
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me Holy  
ouls that  
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and Vi-

They

They convey to us, lastly, a *Right* and  
*Title to Eternal Life and Happiness.* The  
Blessed Sacrament was thought *anciently*  
to have a peculiar Efficacy in prepar-  
ing our Bodies for an Immortal State.  
Thus *Irenaus* says of  
it: \* *As the Bread that*  
*springs from the Earth,*  
*after it is blessed is not*  
*Common Bread, but the*  
*Eucharist, consisting of an*  
*Earthly and an Heavenly*  
*Part, i. e. the Sensible*  
*Sign, and the Spiritual*  
*Thing signified; so our*  
*Bodies receiving the Com-*  
*munion, are not now cor-*  
*ruptible as they were be-*  
*fore, but are put in hope of*  
*a Resurrection.* And St.  
*Ignatius* calls it † *the*  
*Medicine of Immortality,*  
*which is an Antidote to*  
*preserve Men from Dying,*  
*and give them a Life that*  
*is Everlasting.* And to  
this, as 'tis not unlike,  
the Prayer at the giving  
of the Bread and Wine  
refers, That they may *preserve our Souls*  
*and Bodies to everlasting Life,* as it was

D 2

long

\* Quemadmo-  
dum enim qui est  
a terra panis per-  
cipiens invocatio-  
nem Dei, jam non  
Communis panis  
est, sed Eucharis-  
tia, ex duabus  
rebus constans,  
terrena & cele-  
sti: sic & corpo-  
ra nostra perci-  
pientia Eucharis-  
tiam, jam non  
sunt corruptibili-  
a, spem resurre-  
ctiones habentia.  
Iren. l. 4. adv.  
Hær. c. 34.  
† Ἐν αὐτῷ ἵσον κλῆρον  
ἔσται οὗτοί τε ὁ μακάρι-  
ος ἀθανάσιος, αἰ-  
νῶντος τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ ἀπο-  
θανῶντος, ἀλλὰ ζῶν  
ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ  
διὰ πάντες. Ignat.  
Ep. ad Ephes.

*The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

since in the Form of the Western  
reb, and as it is still in use amongst

But whatever becomes of that Con-  
... its preparing our Bodies for it ;  
'tis plain, that a *Right to Life and Immor-  
tality* is conferred by it. *Whoso eateth  
my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, saith our  
Saviour, hath Eternal Life, and I will raise  
him up at the last day, Joh. 6. 54. and a-  
gain, He that catcheth of this Bread shall live  
for ever, v. 58. And if he had not in  
expres Words declared it, in all Equity  
and Reason this might most justly have  
been presumed : For since in this Sacra-  
ment God gives us the Body and Blood  
of his own Son, than which nothing can  
be dearer to him ; we may justly argue  
as St Paul doth, and say, He that spared  
not his own Son, but delivered him up, both  
for, and to us all, how shall he not with him  
also freely give us all things ? Rom. 8. 32.*

Thus are all the *Particular Blessings* of  
the *New Covenant*, which Christs Blood  
has purchased, and which God has pro-  
mised and made over in it, conveyed to  
us in this Holy Sacrament. And since  
they are so, it must needs be a *Federal  
Rite*, and a *Solemn Ceremony of Covenant-  
ing* with God, because otherwise than  
by *Federal Performances and Engagements*  
they are not to be had. God has sus-  
pended



Chap. 1. *in the Sacrament.* 41

pended all all these Benefits upon our Performance of certain Conditions: so that we cannot have them conveyed to us on *his* part, otherwise than by undertaking at the same time for these on *our own*. He will not *forgive* any *Believers their Sins*, unless they *repent* of them; nor help them to any *Graces*, unless they *endeavour* after them; nor reward them at last with *Eternal Life*, unless they have *intirely* obeyed him, as we have already seen. And therefore wheresoever *those* are bestowed, *these* are either performed, or sincerely promised too.

So that from this Reason also, it appears, that the *Sacrament* is a *Federal Rite*, and a Ratification of the *New-Covenant*, and of our *Baptismal Engagement*; because all the Blessings of that Covenant are conveyed by it, which otherwise than by *Federal Performances* or *Engagements* are not to be had.

And thus we see, upon all these accounts, that the Sacrament of the Lords Supper is intended not only for a *Remembrance of the Death of Christ*, but also for a *Renewal* and *Ratification of the New Covenant* which was purchased by it. For so much the *General Nature of Sacraments* which are *Covenant-Rites*, of *Baptism* which goes hand in hand with it, and of

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*the Passover which preceded and answered to it, do fairly intimate; and so much also the Words of institution, at the Blessing both the Bread and Wine declare, and its being a Feast on Sacrifice infers, and its conveying all the Blessings of the Covenant proves concerning it.*

And this is the *Second End* of our Eating Bread, and Drinking Wine in the Holy Sacrament; namely, to *renew our Baptismal Vow*, and in most solemn sort to *confirm the New Covenant* with Almighty God. So that when we come to remember our Saviour Christ in this Feast, we must come also to give and receive Engagements with our Blessed Lord, promising that we will believe all his Words, and endeavour after all Vertues, and obey all his Laws, and repent of all our Faults: and then hoping assuredly that his Mercy shall forgive us, his Grace and Spirit assist us, and his Bounty reward us with Eternal Happiness when we do.

But Besides these Ends of its being in *Remembrance of Christ* and his Dying for us, and in *confirmation of the New Covenant* which his Death procured us; there is yet another,

3ly, And that is, in *Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship with those Brethren*

Chap. I. *in the Sacrament.* 43

*Brethren that Communicate with us, and with all others.*

Eating and Drinking together at the same Table, and joyning in the same Feast, was always a Note of Friendship, and a Profession of Love and Kindness among Men. It is the common way of the World to *compose Differences*, to *keep up Friendliness in Neighbourhoods*, and to *beget Endearment and mutual Love in all Fraternities*. And this our Saviour intended it should be among us. He invites us all to eat of the *same Loaf*, and to Feast at the same Table, that we may embrace as Friends, and love as Brethren, and be knit together in the same Fellowship and Communion. *We being many*, says St. Paul, *are one Bread, and one Body*; for in the Sacrament we are all *Partakers of that one Bread*, which is a firm Bond of Union to make us one also, 1 Cor. 10. 17. It links us together by the most *Powerful Arguments* of our being *Servants of the same Lord*, and *Sharers in the same Priviledges*, and *Members of the same Body*, which are all most *strong Motives* to Peace and mutual Kindness; and besides all this, by our own *Solemn Covenant and Engagement* also. For in coming to this Feast, we are not only excited to it by mighty Reasons which suggest it;



44 *The meaning of Feasting Part I.*

but are to *Covenant* and *Promise Love* to all our Brethren, and to plight our *Troth* for it. And thus the *Primitive Christians* understood it, and accordingly made use of it, whose *Judgment* and *Practice* in this Point were so apparent, that the *Heathens* themselves, who looked any thing into their Religion, took notice of it. For *Pliny* in his Letter to the *Emperour Trajan*, wherein he gives an Account of the *Christians Meetings*, reports their *Communicating* to be a *Religious Compact* and *Combination among themselves*, to do no hurt to each other, but to love as Brethren,

† Soliti stato die ante lucem convenire; carmenque Christo, quasi Deo dicere secum invicem: Sequae Sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne Adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent. quibus peractis morem sibi discendi fuisse, rur-

and live as Friends together. † They assemble early in the morning, says he, and sing an Hymn to Christ as God; and then bind themselves mutually in their Sacrament, which is a sacred Oath, not to commit any wickedness like a pack of lewd Conspirators, but to be no Thieves, Adulterers, Injurious, False and Persidious Persons: and having done these things, and given these Assurances of mutual Honesty and Kindnesses to each

*each other, they depart home, and meet again at a promiscuous and Friendly Treat, where they innocently Feast together.*

*susque coeundi ad capeſcendum cibum, promiſcuum tamen & innoxium. Plin. ep. l. 10. ep. 97.*

This then is a *third* End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Sacrament, namely, to be a *Solemn Profession of our Communion and Fellowship with our Brethren*, and an Engagement of mutual Love and Friendship to those who Communicate with us, and to all others. So that when we come therein to remember our Saviour Christ, and to confirm the new Covenant with Almighty God, we must enter into a League of Love with all our Brethren, and promise an inviolable Friendship unto them too.

And thus we see what is the meaning of Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Communion, and that we must intend and understand by them, that we may, as the Apostle says,

*\* discern the Lords Body* \* 1 Cor. 11. 29.

*in them.* When we Eat Bread and Drink Wine according to Christs appointment, we must fix our thoughts upon him, and remember what Love and Friendship he had for us, what Lessons, as our Faithful Guide and Instru-

46 *The meaning of Feasting* part I.

For, he has taught us; what Commands, as our Lord and Master, he has left with us; and what *inexpressible Things*, as our most Precious Saviour and Benefactor, he has done for us, in being made Man, and leading a mean and necessitous Life, but above all in dying a most ignominious and painful Death for our sakes, and that he might purchase us the Favour of God, the Graces of the Spirit, and Eternal Happiness. We must renew that Engagement which we made when we were Baptized, and confirm again that new Covenant with Almighty God which his Blood procured; professing that we do, and will believe his Word, and repent of every Fault, and endeavour with his Spirit, and obey all, not wilfully transgressing any Commandment; that so we may have Right to that Forgiveness, Grace, and Happiness, which upon these Terms he has purchased. And lastly, we must confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all our Brethren, professing that we do and will forgive all that injure us, and be kind to all about us, and never fall into Hatred or cause Difference with any Persons, but be at Peace and live in Charity with all the World. The Bodily Eating is but the out-side, and the least part in this Feast; but the chief thing required is this Spiritual Work

Chap. I. *in the Sacrament.* 47

Work and Business, which is to accompany it. So that when our Saviour Christ calls us to Eat and Drink at his own Table, he calls us not barely to Feast our Bodies, for that is the least thing that he intends; but chiefly and principally to employ our Souls, in remembering him, his Laws and Benefits, and among *them*, above all, that of his Dying for us; in confirming the New Covenant with God, and a Covenant of Peace and Brotherly Love with his Members throughout all Mankind.

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C H A P.

## C H A P. II.

*Of the Worthiness of Communicating  
in the Sacrament.*

## The Contents.

*To Communicate Worthily, is to do it with  
such Tempers and Behaviours as are worthy  
of it, and becoming the Things which are  
meant by it. The First End was to re-  
member Christ, both, 1. As our Lord  
and Master, which calls for Honour and  
Reverence in our selves, and a Care to  
maintain his Honour among others. For  
mindfulness of his Commands, and Reso-  
lutions of Obedience. 2. As our most  
kind Friend and Benefactor, which calls  
for Love and an hearty Affection for him.  
For Joy and Gladness in what we receive  
from him. For Thankfulness for all his  
Kindnesses, particularly in Dying for us.  
And as this Death was a Sacrifice for our  
Sins, the Remembrance of it calls for a  
deep sense of our own Unworthiness. An  
utter Abhorrence of our Sins, which caused  
his Sufferings. A Resignation of our selves  
to his Use, as thereby we are become his  
own Purchase. The Second End was to  
confirm*

confirm the New Covenant with God which his Blood procured. This calls for Sincerity and Faithfulness. A Third End was to confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all Christians. This calls for Peace and Charity to all Persons, and particularly for Alms to the Neccessitous. A Summary Repetition of these Qualifications. A Belief of these Things, which carries us on to these Tempers and Performances, is the Faith that makes us Worthy Communicants.

HAVING shewn hitherto what is the meaning of Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament, I proceed now, in the next place, to shew wherein lies the Worthiness of Doing it. And this had need be clearly stated, not only because the most considerable Scruple against Communicating lies in it, but also because really 'tis a Matter of great account, and there hangs a great weight upon it. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, says the Apostle, commits a Damning Sin, which will destroy him, unless he repent of it; he eats and drinks Damnation to himself, 1 Cor. 11. 29; and is guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, v. 27.

Now

Now to *Do this Worthily*, is to *Do it* *it with such Tempers and Dispositions as become it, and are worthy of it.* For this Eating and Drinking ~~not~~ being to satisfy Hunger, but for Sacred Ends; 'tis fit we come to it with a suitable and a Sacred Carriage, and in that consists the Worthiness of the Usage. Were it only a Feast on *Common Food*, we should behave our selves worthily at it, by *thanking God* for it, and being *Temperate*. But being a Feast wherein *Religion* is concerned, and whereat we are to *remember the Death of our Lord*, and to *Seal the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Love with all the Christian World*; to the doing this worthily, and as 'tis fit we should, there is more required. For we deal very unworthily in *remembering the Death of our Lord*, if we are not *thankful* for it; and in *ratifying the New Covenant* with God, if we are not *sincere* in it; and in *promising Love* to all the *Christian World*, if we are in *enmity* and *hatred*. These Religious Ends must be answered with a Religious Temper, and a Devout Carriage, and then they are treated as they ought, and as their Worth requires. This is signified by several Copies, which in 1 Cor. 11. 27. read not barely, *Who-so-ever shall Eat this Bread and Drink this*

Cup

Cup \* OF THE LORD  
UNWORTHILY; but  
whosoever shall Eat this  
Bread and Drink this Cup  
of the Lord UNWORTHILY OF THE

LORD, i. e. in a way unworthy of him, which clearly shews the Unworthiness to consist in the want of those Tempers wherewith 'tis fit our Blessed Lord, who is commemorated in it, should be treated. And this the Apostle plainly intimates, when he places the unworthiness of

Eating in not Discerning, or rather Discriminating the Lords Body, and putting a difference between it and Common Food, by a different Carriage and Behavior at it. He that eats and drinks unworthily, says he, eats and drinks Damnation to himself for such unworthy usage, which lies in his not discerning, or rather not † discriminating the Lords Body,

1 Cor. 11. 29.

Thus doth a worthy Eating of the Sacrament consist in answering its Sacred  
Ends

\* Not meerly *ἀνα-  
τὸ πικτερον* & *κα-  
πὶς ἀναξίως* but  
*ἀναξίως τὸ καπνῶν*,  
as several MMS.  
partic. Coll. Linc.  
Coll. Nov. reads  
the place. And this  
is followed by St.  
Ambrose, who  
reads thus--*bibe-  
rit Calicem Do-  
mini indigne Do-  
mino, v. 27. and*  
St. Chrysostom,  
who reads thus---  
*ἐξίως καὶ πικρῶν ἀ-  
ναξίως [τὸ καπνῶν]*  
*καπνῶν καὶ πικρῶν, &c.*  
v. 29.

† *καὶ μὴ διακρίνει.*



Ends with Sacred and suitable Carriage and Dispositions. And therefore that we may see what Behaviour is worthy of it, 'tis fit we run over those several Ends, and inquire what Tempers every one of them requires of us.

Those Ends are Three.

1<sup>st</sup>, To Remember *Christ* our Blessed Lord and Saviour, and particularly his Dying for us; which call for Love, Joy, Gratitude, Obedient Resolutions, and such like Tempers.

2<sup>ly</sup>, To Confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God; which is not worthily done by us, unless we come to it in Sincerity and Faithfulness, and with full Purpose and Performance of that Repentance and Obedience which we profess and promise.

3<sup>ly</sup>, To Confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all our Brethren and Fellow-Christians; which requires that we lay aside all Envy, Hatred, and Malicious Thoughts, and come to it in Peace and Forgiveness of all that have any ways offended us.

If we Believe all these things which *Christ* our Great Prophet has revealed to us, and our Faith shewvs it self in these Tempers, and carries us on to these Performances; we are Worthy Communicants, and have

have that *Faith* which will render us welcom Guests at the Lords Table, and acceptable to him at all other times.

1<sup>st</sup>, One End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine at the Lords Supper, is to *remember Christ*, not only as our *Prophet* and *Teacher* (which I do not make a *Distinct* Head now, because the *Belief* required to that is exercised thro' the whole Action, and falls in at all the other) but as our *Blessed Lord, Saviour* and *Benefactor*; and above all his Benefits, particularly to remember *his Dying for us*: and this, to do it worthily, calls for *Love, Joy, Gratitude, Resolutions of Obedience*, and other such like tempers.

The Remembrance of any thing absent, and long since past, brings it back into our Minds, and gives a sort of *Presence* to it. And therefore when things are brought to our Remembrance, they should work upon us, and affect us, as if they were before us. When we remember our Saviour Christ, then we must bear the same Mind towards him, as we should if we saw him, and were conversing with him: and that will consist in these Things that follow. We must *Honour him*, and *resolve to Obey him*, as he is our *Lord* and *Master*; and *Love him*, and *Delight in him*, and *give Thanks to him*, as he  
is

is our Friend and Benefactor; and be humbled under the sense of our own Unworthiness, and abhor our own Sins, as they brought him to bleed and die for us; and resign up our selves, both Souls and Bodies, to his Use, as we are bought with his Blood, and are thereby become his own Purchase.

1<sup>st</sup>, In Eating and Drinking in the Lords Supper, we are to remember Christ as our Lord and Master; and to do that Worthily, we must remember him with Honour and Reverence, and with mindfulness of his Commands, and Resolutions of Obedience, which are Duties we owe, and should pay to him, were he present with us.

1<sup>st</sup>, We ought to remember him our Lord and Master, with Honour and Reverence.

These Tempers Lordship and Authority always call for, whensoever they are lodged in any Persons. *A Son honoureth his Father, saith God, and a Servant his Master: if then I be a Father, where is mine Honour? and if I be a Master, where is my Fear?* Mal 1. 6. Honour the King, says St. Peter, and Servants be subject to your Masters with all fear, 1 Pet. 2. 17, 18. And Render to all their Dues, says St. Paul, as Fear or Reverence to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour is due, Rom. 13. 7.

But

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But when this Authority is in the *most absolute and full Degrees*, and is *joyned with the highest Excellencies*, and *tempered with the most Endearments*, and *guided by the most surpassing Goodness*, as it is in *Christ Jesus*, it calls for them most especially. For he is every way wonderfully accomplished, and has all those Endowments in their greatest perfection, which of right can challenge, or are fit to excite them. For he is *boundless in knowledge*, he † *understands all things*; and *infinitely* \* *wise in Counsel*, able to suit means to every end, and bring about every Purpose; and *surpassing in* † *Might*, so that he may do what he pleases; and \* *holy in all his ways*; and † *faithful in all his Promises*; and \* *just and equitable in all his Dealings*; and *Glorious in his Divine Essence* being the very † *Brightness of his Fathers Glory*, and † *the express Image of his Person*; and *Supereminent in Power*, having all \* *Authority in Heaven & Earth* put into his hands. And yet in the midst of all these *Excellencies*, and the height of all this *Greatness*,

† Joh. 21. 17.

\* Isa. 11. 1, 2.

† Isa. 9. 6. & Rev. 3. 7.

\* 1 Joh. 3. 5.

† Rev. 3. 7.

\* Isa. 9. 7.

† Heb. 1. 3.

\* Mat. 28. 18.

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*ness*, which are apt to puff us up with *Pride* and *Contempt of others*, he is

† 1 Joh. 3. 16. *unspeakable in* † *Love*, and  
\* Phil. 2. 6, 7, *wonderful in* \* *Condescensions*, vouchsafing to leave  
8. Heaven, where he was *E-*

*qual to God*, and *be made in fashion of a*  
*mean Man*, for our sakes;

† Mar. 10. 45. and *unwearied in* † *doing*  
Act. 10. 38. *Services*; and *most prodigi-*  
*ously free in Bounty and*

\* Joh. 6. 15. *Kindness*, giving his own  
Rev. 5. 9. \* *Hearts Bloud* to purchase  
*Heaven and Eternal Life*

for us: for all which *Height of Excel-*  
*lencies*, and *Plenitude of Power*, and  
*Depth of Love*, he is most

† Rev. 5. 11, † *profoundly Reverenced*,  
12, 13. and *dearly prized*, & *highly*  
*exalted by Glorified Saints*,

and the *pure and immortal Angels*. All  
these *adorable Excellencies* are in their  
utmost *Perfection* in our Lord and Ma-  
ster, Christ Jesus; and their *Merit* calls  
for all the *Honour and Reverence* which he  
can possibly receive from us. And this  
accordingly God has expressly required  
of us. *He hath committed all Judgment*  
*to the Son*, that all should honour the Son.  
*even as they honour the Father*, Joh. 5. 22, 23.  
and *highly exalting him*, hath given him a  
Name

*Name above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Kne should bow, of things in Heaven, and of things in Earth, Phil.2. 9, 10.* He incomparably deserves our utmost Worship and Reverence, and has a most absolute claim to them; so that we must needs treat him with the most submissive and respectful Carriage, and should deal most unworthily by him, and do what utterly misbecomes us, if we should do otherwise.

Thus must we remember our Lord and Master Jesus Christ with *Honour and Veneration*, if we would do it in such sort as is *worthy* of him.

Nay, we must not only Honour and Reverence him *our selves*, but, if we would deal worthily by him, seek to *make him Honourable*, and promote his Honour among *others*. We must be ready always to plead his Cause, and to vindicate his Precepts, and to side with his Servants, and express a just Distaste against those who transgress his Commands themselves (and much more against those who set up for the Party of Disobedience, and seek to draw in others) who prophane his Ordinances, or lightly and irreverently use his Name, or any ways villifie any Person or Thing which he ought to be Glorified and Honoured

in

in. And this we shall be sure to do, if we have any high Esteem, and Zeal of Love, and affectionate Concern for him. For when these are strong in them, every *Servant* will perform this Office to his *Master*, and every *Man* to his *Friend*: they will not sit still, and tamely hear his Name abused, or see his Commands slighted, his Interest opposed, his Children or Dependents injured, his Appointments disparaged, or his Person any way traduced or disgraced, without expressing a Discreet and well-tempered Zeal in his Cause, and concerning themselves in a sober and just Vindication. This, I say, they ordinarily will do, as I am sure they always ought to do, when they have an high esteem for any Man. And if, thro' lowness of Spirit, or Cowardise of Temper, they draw back from the Trouble or Hazard they are like to run in his Vindication; they are very much wanting to their Friend or Lord, and deal unworthily by him. So that if we would deal worthily by our Friend and Master Jesus Christ, we must neither dishonour him our selves, nor, if we can help it, at least not without expressing our dislike of it, suffer it to be done by others. And therefore to make this Sacramental Remembrance worthy of him,  
it

it must not only be in shewing Honour and Reverence to him our selves, but in a readiness to maintain his Honour, and promote his Interest among others also.

2ly, We must Remember Christ our Lord and Master, with *mindfulness of his Commands, and Resolutions of Obedience.*

This is another Temper, which Lordship and Authority over us calls for. For the most proper Duty of *Subjects* towards their *Sovereigns*, and of *Servants* towards their *Masters*, is *Obedience*, or a Carefulness to perform whatsoever they enjoyn and require of them. *Put them in mind*, says the Apostle, *to be subject to principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates*, Tit. 3. 1. And *Servants obey your Masters in all things, not with eye-service, but in singleness of heart, fearing God*, Col. 3. 22. And *Why call ye me Lord, Lord*, says our Saviour, *and do not the things which I say?* Luc. 6. 46.

Thus is Obedience the great Duty which we owe to all Masters and Governours that have Authority over us. We must neither forget the Commands they have left with us, nor knowingly transgress them, but carefully call them into our Minds, and conscientiously practice them when we do.

And this we are then especially bound to,



to, if they are not only our *Masters*, but our *Dearest Friends*, and *Noblest Benefactors* also. For these are Names that add new Bonds, and higher Obligations, which will have a great force so long as there is any thing of ingenuity left in us. And therefore since our Blessed Master Jesus is not only our Rightful Lord and Governour, but withal our most surpassing kind Friend and Benefactor, we ought in all Duty and Gratitude to be mindful of what he desires, and to do any thing that he would have us; and we deal most undutifully and unworthily by him, if we do otherwise. So that this also is another Instance of the Worthiness of this Remembrance, to be mindful of the Laws which he has given us, and to think of them with a Readiness and firm Resolution to obey.

These are the things then which must render our Remembrance worthy of him under this Relation. When we Eat and Drink in Commemoration of Christ our Lord and King, we must Honour and Reverence him *our selves*, and be concerned to maintain his Honour, and promote his Interests among others, and be mindful of the Commands he has left with us, and ready and resolved to obey them.

2ly, In Eating Bread and Drinking Wine

Wine at the Lords Supper, we are to remember *Christ* as our *most kind Friend and Benefactor*; and to do this worthily, we must remember him with *Love of him, and Delight in him, and grateful Resentments and hearty Thanks* for all the Kindnesses which we have received from him.

1<sup>st</sup>, We must remember him our most *kind Friend and Benefactor* with *Love, and an hearty Affection* for him.

This is due to him as he is our *Gracious Lord*, and indeed in every Relation that he stands in, since in all he is most wonderfully winning and obliging. For even there he seeks our own Good in every thing he commands us, and treats us with much Gentleness, and encourages every thing that is well in us, and pities our unavoidable Infirmities, and bears our many and high Provocations with invincible Patience, and sends Messengers of Peace to entreat and sue for a Reconciliation with us upon any Difference, tho' 'tis not his Interest but ours, and tho' not he but we are the Offenders; and, when he is forced to punish, doth it always with the greatest reluctance; but when he can take an occasion to reward, doth that with the greatest Joy and cheerfulness; and all which are strangely engaging, and must needs constrain all ingenuous

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genuous Tempers to be heartily in Love with him.

But our Love is due to him more especially, as he is our *most kind Friend*, that loves us as he doth his own Life; and our *most noble Benefactor*, who has so infinitely obliged us, and done such Kindnesses for us, as we are not able to express.

He is our *true Friend*, who espouses our Interests as his own, and is sensible of all our wants, and pained in all our Afflictions, and rejoices in all our Joys, and seeks to make us share in his own Happiness, and would part with any thing he hath to please us, nay give his own Hearts Blood in any Case which were worth the while to do us a Kindness.

He is our *most noble Benefactor*, who has done us such Kindnesses as are beyond all Expressions, having procured for us the Favour of God, the Help of the Spirit, and the assured Hope of Eternal Happiness, when all these seemed irrevocably lost, and no way attainable by us; and when he could not gain them at a less Rate, than by laying down his own Life for the Purchase.

And these are Endearments which pass all Imagination; they are such Arguments

ments to a reciprocal Love and Kindness, as cannot be withstood by any Man. So that having received all this Love from him, we must needs return the small Tribute of Love to him again, or else we should be the unworthiest of any persons living.

And this is one Temper which is necessary to a worthy Remembrance of so *kind a Friend*, and so *noble a Benefactor* as we have of our Blessed Saviour: We must love the Thoughts of him, and be most kindly affected towards him, or else we shall shew our selves utterly unworthy of him.

2<sup>ly</sup>, We must Remember him our most Noble *Benefactor*, and the Favours he has done, with *Joy and Gladness*.

This is a Temper very necessary in us, when we would worthily Commemorate the Receipt of Benefits. For when we rejoyce in them, we shew what Rate we put upon them, and how much we are pleased in them, and how happy we think our selves in that Love which bestowed them on us. And this will make the Person that conferred them think them well placed, and please himself in what he has done, concluding, that we, who are so sensible of a Kindness when 'tis shewed us, are worthy to receive one.

And therefore the Scripture calls all good Men, who have received most invaluable Benefits, to Joy and Gladness. *Rejoyce in the Lord, O ye Righteous*, saith the Psalmist, *for Praise is comely for the Upright*, Psal. 33. 1.

And this we all ought to shew when we Commemorate those Blessings which our Blessed Saviour has conferred upon us. He has got all those things for us which our hearts can wish, no less than the pure and perfect Joys of Heaven, and Eternal Happiness; and these he has taken the hardest pains, and been at the greatest Cost to compass, laying down his own Life for them, rather than he would suffer us to go without them. And this we ought not at any time to think of, without Joy and gladness. When we reflect upon so great Love, and such inestimable Benefits, 'tis most fit and reasonable we rejoyce over them, that thereby we may shew forth how happy we think ourselves in them. And our Blessed Lord may well think he threw them away upon us, and repent that ever he bestowed, or took such pains for them, if after all he sees us insensible of what is done, and still as cold and unaffected as if we had received nothing. So that if we would worthily Commemorate the  
Receipt

Receipt of so great Happiness, we must do it with joyful Hearts, and chearful Looks, and an open show of Gladness; as we are told the *Disciples* did in the first Days, who, as St. *Luke* says, continued daily in the Temple, and breaking Bread, eating it with Gladness of Heart, *Act. 2. 46.*

3ly, We must Remember him our most Noble Benefactor with grateful Resentments and hearty Thanks for all his Kindnesses, particularly for that of his Dying for us.

In *Thankfulness* are implied two things.

1st, A grateful acknowledgment of the Gift, and a Praising him that gave it.

2ly, A Readiness and Endeavour according to our Power to requite it.

It implies a grateful Acknowledgment of the Gift, and a Praising of him that gave it. For when we receive an undeserved Benefit, it is very fit that we let the Donor know we are sensible of it, and understand very well both our own Happiness in receiving and his Kindness in bestowing it. We must give him the praise of his Beneficence, and express a Sense of our own Obligations: For if we fail in this, we shew either that we *contemn his Gift*, and set no value on it, or that we think it only a *Tribute to our own Desert*, so as that we are not beholding to him for it;

it; or that we would be *independent*, and are too proud to be obliged by it; all which, had they been known to him before-hand, would have made *him* and all *men* judge us most *unworthy* to receive it.

It implies also a *Readiness* and *Endeavour* according to our Power to requite it. For Love should engage Love, and the Kindnesses which are done us, oblige us upon all Opportunities to do the same again. To encourage Benefits and bestowing Favours, we ought to take care that they who gave them never have any just cause to repent of them, and to let them see, that if we had the Power and Opportunity, we would do as much for them. For Kindnesses should be a sort of *Loans*, which, upon any fit occasion, are to be repaid back to him who shewed them, that so all Men may be encouraged to abound in them, and never be hindred by a fear lest afterwards they should be offended with themselves for having bestowed them. And if any Man is either so *stupid*, or so *proud*, that he will take no notice of them, nor endeavour afterwards to requite them, by the consent of all he is unfit to be dealt with in this *generous* way of Love, and is utterly *unworthy* to receive them.

Thus doth Thankfulness imply, both  
an

an affectionate Acknowledgment of the Gift, and Praising him that gave it; and also a Readiness and Endeavour according to our Power to requite it.

And this we owe in the highest measure to our Saviour Christ, and must be sure always to pay him, when we Commemorate the inestimable Benefits which we have received from him. We must not remember the great Things he has done for us, in delivering us from Eternal Death, and gaining us the Favour of God, and the Joys of Heaven, when it cost him no less than his own Hearts Blood for the Purchase, without affectionate Resentments, and Mouths full of Praise, and a fixt Readiness and Resolution of Mind to make what small requital we are able in our Zeal for his Service, and our Kindness to his *Brethren*, whom he looks on as his own Members, resenting any Good that is *done to them*, as if it were *done to himself*, Matt. 25. 40. And this Duty of Thankfulness is a most especial Requisite to our Worthy Commemoration of his Benefits in this Feast. For *Praising God* is reckoned as one Particular of the Disciples Carriage in their *Breaking Bread*, Act. 2. *They continued daily breaking Bread*, says St. Luke, *which they eat with gladness, praising God*, v. 46, 47.



Nay, so great a share has Thanksgiving and Praise in this Business, that the whole Action is called the *Eucharist*, i. e. the Giving of Thanks to God for those Benefits which are therein Commemorated.

And these are the Things which must render our Remembrance worthy of him, when we Commemorate him as our *Friend* and *Benefactor* in this Holy Supper. We must love him for his Kindnesses, and delight in his Benefits, and be thankful for all his Favours, particularly for that which is therein especially Commemorated, his *Dying* upon our accounts, bursting out into grateful *Acknowledgments* and *Words of Praise*, and being ready and resolved by our *Zeal in his Service*, our *Obedience of his Laws*, and our *Kindness to his poor Members*, to make him all the small *Requit*al we are able, so that he may never have any cause to repent of what he has done for us.

But besides this Remembrance of his Friendship to us, and *Benefits in general*, which require in us these forementioned Tempers; we are especially to commemorate the *Benefits of his Dying for us*, which more particularly calls for certain others.

In Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Lords Supper, I say, we are to remember

remember *his dying for us*, and shedding his *Blood a Ransom for our Sins*. And to do this worthily, we must be *humbled under the sense of our own unworthiness*, and *abhor our Sins* which brought him to bleed and die for us, and *resign up our selves* both Souls and Bodies to *his use*, as we are bought with his Blood, and thereby become his own Purchase.

It, We must remember his Dying for us in *an humble and deep sense of our own unworthiness*, and in an *utter abhorrence of our Sins*, which brought him to these *Sufferings*.

We must remember it, I say, in *an humble and deep sense of our own unworthiness*. His Death was not for any thing that he had done, but only for our Sins; and this shews what *vile Wretches* we are, and how *unworthy Persons*. It lets us see how *hateful* our Sins hath made us unto God, and what they had *deserv'd* at his Hands. For he would not let them pass without inflicting the highest Shame, and the most exquisite Pain and Tortures. Yea, when his own only Begotten Son would intercede for them, and bear the Burden of them in his own Person, so implacable was the hatred he had to them, and so indispensable the Reasons that constrained him to punish them, that

his most tender Love for him, whom he valued as his own Right Eye, could not hinder but that he should bleed and die for them. It lets us see also, how *troublesom* they had made us to our *best Friends*, and how shamefully *burdensom* and *expensive* to the *Blessed Jesus*. For when he long'd and labour'd to redeem us from them, he could not be *our* Friend unless he would cease to be *his own*; nor do us any good at all, except he would give his own life a Ransom. And what Man now can ever think of this, but he must hide his Face, and be quite buried in a shameful sense of his own Unworthiness? He may see how vile he was, when God was so highly offended with him, and thought no Punishment too heavy for him, and would not be reconcil'd at the Intercession of his own Son, unless he would die instead of him; and it was so dangerous and costly a thing, no less than the laying down his own Life, for his Saviour to shew himself a serviceable Friend to him. And if this Sight doth not work shame and self-abasement in him, he will be concluded by all to be the basest Man alive, and utterly unworthy that ever any thing of all this unparalleled Kindness should have been done him.

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We must also remember his Dying for us with *an utter abhorrence of our Sins, which were the Causes of his Sufferings*. For if we do not hate and abhor them, when we consider what Tortures he endured for them, we shew we are very little concerned for his Ease, nor have any feeling of his Pains, nor any Zeal at all against the Occasion of his Sorrows. And this is a very bad Requital of his undergoing all those Pains for our sakes, and a most unworthy Usage. So that if we would worthily commemorate his Dying for us, we must be humbled and ashamed of our selves, at the sense of our own Unworthiness, seeing we had deserved such insupportable Punishments, and have put him to such exquisite and intense Pains; and particularly we must turn our abhorrence on our Sins, which caused all this Mischiefe, and made him, if he would befriend us, to undergo such heavy Tortures.

2ly, We must remember his Dying for us, with a *Resignation of our selves, both Souls and Bodies to his use, as we are bought with his Blood, and thereby become his own Purchase*.

He died in our stead, and his Blood was given to God for a *Ransom*, to buy us off from it, that we might not die also.

*The*

*The Son of Man*, saith he, *is come to give his Life Ransom for many*, Mat. 20. 28. And since he has bought us, and paid so dear for us, to deliver us from Hell-torments and Eternal Death, which is not *his*, but *our own* Advantage; in all Equity and Reason he ought to have the Use of us, and we should be wholly devoted to his Service. And this the Scripture requires of us: *The Love of God constrains us*, saith St. Paul, to live to him, *because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them*, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 25. And again, *Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a Price; therefore glorifie God in your Body and in your Spirit, which are Gods*, 1 Cor. 6. 19-20. And since his Dying for us has made us his own Propriety, and acquired him an absolute Right over us to his own use, which we had infinite Reason to desire, but he had no need of; if we would remember it *worthily*, we must do it *justly*, by honestly devoting our Souls and Bodies, and assigning them over to him, to be wholly at his Service.

And these are the Things which must render our Remembrance worthy of him, when in the Holy Sacrament we Commemorate

memorate his Dying for us, and shedding his most precious Blood a Ransom for our Sins. We must be *humbled* with the sense of our own Unworthiness, and *abhor our Sins*, which brought him to these Sufferings, and *resign up our selves*, both Bodies and Souls, to be wholly at his use, and employed where and in what he pleases, as thereby they are become his own Purchase.

And thus it appears what Tempers are becoming us, and worthy of this *first* End of Eating and Drinking in the Holy Sacrament, *viz.* the Remembrance of our Lord and Saviour Christ, and his Dying for us. We must remember him with Honour and Reverence, with a careful Concern to maintain and promote his Honour among others, with *mindfulness* of his Commands, and Resolutions of Obedience, as he is Lord over us: With Love of him for his Kindness, and *delight* in his Benefits, and *thankful Acknowledgments*, and Words of Praise, and grateful Returns, in any thing he can receive, or we can give, for all his Favours, particularly his Dying on our account, as he has so highly befriended, and infinitely obliged us; and with an humble sense of our own unworthiness, and an utter abhorrence of all our Sins, which were the Causes of his Sufferings,

ferings, and an *intire* Resignation of our selves, both Souls and Bodies to his use, to be employ'd as his own Purchase in what he pleases, as his Death was a *Sacrifice* for our Sins, wherewith he bought and redeemed us. All these are Duties, which, were he now before us, and conversing with us, we ought to pay him; and which therefore in our Remembrance of him, which makes him present to our Minds, we must not deny him: and in them consists the Worthiness of this Remembrance and Commemoration.

2ly, A *second* End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Lords Supper, is to *confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God which Christs Death procured*: And to do this *worthily*, we must come to it in *Sincerity* and *Faithfulness*, and with *full purpose and performance* of that *Repentance and Obedience*, which therein we solemnly *profess* and *promise*.

We must come to it, I say, in *Sincerity* and *Faithfulness*. The great Qualification which is requisite in all Compacts, is *Faithfulness*. For they are the great Means of Security among Men, and the great Thing, which in their Expectations from each other, they have to depend upon: and therefore it is both *pretended*, and *expected* by all that make them, that  
they

they will not prove false and deceitful in them. Every Man that Covenants, expects those he Contracts with, should mean what they profess, and perform what they promise; and make shew also himself, that he will do so likewise. And if he doth not, he is a very dishonest unworthy Man, such as the *Gospel* condemns, and will sentence, unless he repent, to eternal destruction: *Covenant-breakers* being ranked among those, who in the *Judgment of God* are worthy of *Death*, Rom. 1. 31, 32.

And this *Sincerity* or *Faithfulness* consists in this, that we come with *full purpose* and *performance* of that *Repentance* and *Obedience*, which we *profess* and make *promise* of. In this Covenant, to all us *Believers*, God *offers at present a Right to Pardon*, his *Holy Spirit*, and *Eternal Happiness*; and we again *profess*, and make offer to him of our *Repentance* and *Obedience*. And this *Right* he *promises* still to *continue* to us upon the same *Terms*; and answerably we *promise* to perform them upon that expectation for ever afterwards. And both in these *Professions* and *Promises* we must deal *sincerely* with him, and neither pretend a present offer of them, when we want them; nor make *Promises* of them for the time to come, when



when we have no fixed Design and well-weighed Resolution to perform them.

When we come therefore to renew our *Baptismal Engagement*, and to confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God, giving him both the *Profession* and the *Promise* of these Duties, and receiving from him the *Proffer* and the *Promise* of these Graces, we must be hearty and unfeigned with him. Our Souls must really be acted by that Repentance which we profess, and fully intend to make good that Obedience which we promise. And if we perform in both these, we are faithful and sincere in this Business; but if we fail in either, we are *Dissemblers* and *Hypocrites*, who act a Part, and go to impose upon Almighty God, which is a very unworthy part of us.

And this Sincerity God expressly calls for at this Feast, and requires us to be faithful with him when we come to confirm the New Covenant by partaking of it. *Christ our Passover*, says St. Paul, is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the Feast, not with the Leaven of Malice and Wickedness, by adhering still to our former wicked ways, which therefore we are to repent of, but with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth, 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. And as for Repentance particularly, which

which is the great Condition of the Covenant renewed in it, it is the great Qualification of all worthy receivers, and is most indispensably required in this Sacrament. It is the chief thing that is looked at in every Confirmation of the Covenant, & therefore is so peremptorily † called for when we are baptized: it is the only thing that can \* recommend a Sacrifice, and therefore the main point that must fit us for this Feast upon it. And this the Ancient Church always thought of it; as it plainly shew'd, when at the Celebration of it the Bishop cri'd out, † *These Holy Things must be taken only by Holy Persons*; and as St. Ambrose clearly informs us, when he says, \* *This is the Order of dispensing this Mystery*, which every Church observes, that first upon their true Repentance their Sins may be forgiven them, and then this Heavenly Food shall be administered and reach'd out to them.

† Act. 2. 38.

Luc. 3. 3.

\* Psal. 51. 17.

† Ὁ ἱερεὺς  
πρωτοῦ λαοῦ  
λαβὲτω τὰ ἅγια  
τοῖς ἱεροῖς. Con-  
stit. Apost. l. 8.  
c. 13. p. 484. tom.  
prim. Concil. Ed.  
Par Lab.

\* Ubique mysterii  
ordo servatur, ut  
prius per remissi-  
onem Peccatorum  
vulneribus medi-  
cina tribuatur,  
postea alimonia  
menise Cœlestis  
exuberet. S. An-

bros. Comment. in Luc. l. 6. c. 9.

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As this Eating and drinking then is a Federal Rite, and in Confirmation of the New Covenant, it requires that we be Faithful and Sincere in doing it; and then we come worthily, and partake of it as we ought, when we truly *Repent* of all our Sins, as we profess, and are *fully purposed*, as we promise, at all times after so to do.

3ly, A third End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Lords Supper, is, to *confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all Christians*: and this requires that we lay aside all *Envy, Hatred, and Malicious Thoughts*; and come to it in *Peace and Forgiveness* of all that have any ways offended us.

We must not come to it in *Envy, Hatred, and Malicious Thoughts*; for that were to give the Lye to our selves, and to contradict our own Professions. For when we come there to partake of that *one Bread*, we profess our selves, as has been shewn, to be all *one Body*, and that we are all the *Body of Christ*, and *Members one of another*. We solemnly declare, that we will be Friends from that day forwards with all persons, and fully reconciled even to our bitter Enemies, and those who have given us the highest Provocations, though not for their own sakes,

sakes, yet for the sake of Christ, who has bore a thousand times more from us, and deserves infinitely beyond what this comes to at our hands. We promise mutually, that we will lay aside all little Piques, and not fall out into Quarrels or Contentions, nor bear Ill-will, or be vexatious among our selves, nor seek our own Pleasure, Honour, or Advantage at our Brethrens loss: but that we will all have a compassionate sence of each others Infirmities, and a tender concern and diligent care for each others welfare: that we will live as Members of the same Body, which all feel what befalls any, and are all solaced with the same Joys, and all languish in the same Sorrows, and all unite in the same Ends, and all bear the Weaknesses and supply the Needs, and seek the Good and Pleasure of each other, as they do their own. All this Goodwill and Brotherly-kindness, Peace and Forgiveness towards all Persons, we profess in eating together at this Feast; and therefore it is most unworthy dealing if we want them, and are even then acted by Hatred, Envy, and malicious Thoughts, which are most opposite and contrary to them.

Thus is it necessary when we confirm this League of Love and Friendship to  
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our Brethren, that we lay aside all Envy and Ill-will, and have perfect Charity towards all Men. And this Charity must be shewn, as in *Prayers* and *Good Wishes* at all times, and in *Courteous Carriages* and *good Offices* as oft as we have opportunity, towards all Persons; so particularly in *giving Alms*, and affording Relief to such as want and are *necessitous*. For the League of Love whereinto we are then to enter, and which Christ exacts of us, is not only to bestow *fair words*, or *compassionate looks*, or *faint wishes*; but, if we are able, to *relieve* as we have opportunity, and supply those who stand in need of our substance. *If a Brother or a Sister be naked*, says St. James, *or destitute of daily Food? and one of you say unto them, Depart in Peace, be ye warmed or filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are necessary for the Body, what doth it profit*, Jam. 2. 15, 16. *My little Children*, saith St. John, *let us not love in word only, neither in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth: And hereby*, i. e. by this useful operative Charity, *we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our hearts before him*, 1 Joh. 3. 18, 19. And thus the *Ancient Christians* constantly used to do in the Apostles times. For then at every Lords Supper, they had another of their own,

own, which they call'd a *Love Feast*, or *Feast of Charity*, Jud. 12. This consisted of such Provillion as every Communicant brought along with him; they that were *Rich* brought in much, and the *Poorer* sort less, but when it came, they all sate down in a Brotherly way, and shared in common. Which when the *Corinthians* failed to do, every one eating as they came without tarrying for their Brethren, and the Rich taking their own large Portions to themselves, and leaving the Poor to blush at the scantiness of theirs; the Apostle reproved them sharply, telling them how much they prophaned this Holy Feast by such corrupt usage. *In eating*, says he, at this Feast, instead of joyning all like loving Brethren at a common Supper, *every one taketh before other his own Supper*, or that which he brought for his own share, *and one, who brought little, is Hungry* through his scarceness, *and another, who brought much, is Drunken* with the excess of his. *Shall I praise you in this; I praise you not*, 1 Cor 11. 21, 22. And when this way of being Charitable to the Poor at this Feast, by reason of abuses crept into it, was laid aside; another was still used, which to this day is practised in many and the best of our Churches, as 'tis fit it should in all, and that is, ha-  
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ving *offerings for the Poor* at every Communion, which may afterwards be distributed among them. Which is a most proper way, and excellent opportunity, not only of exercising that Charity which therein we profess to them; but also of expressing our Thankfulness to our Blessed Saviour, for the invaluable benefits we have received from him. For in being thus kind to his poor Members, whom he is so tenderly concerned for, we make some slight return and poor requital unto him, who puts their Receipts upon his own score, taking what we do to them as done to his own Person. *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me, Mat. 25. 40.*

And these are the things which must render our eating and drinking, as it is in *Confirmation of a League of Love and Friendship with all our Brethren*, worthy of that signification. We must lay aside all *Envy and Malicious Thoughts*, and come to it in *Forgiveness* of all that have offended us, and in *Charity* to all our Neighbours, which we must express, as in other things, so particularly in *giving Alms* to such whose necessities require it of us.

And all these the *Scripture* it self marks out as necessary *Qualifications* in all *worthy Communions*. *Let us keep the Feast,*  
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says the Apostle, *not with the Leaven of Malice*, 1 Cor 5. 8. *When ye come together into one place*, says he again, *I hear there be Divisions among you*; And, when there are so, *this is not to eat the Lords Supper*, one End whereof is to unite you, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20. *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar*, says our Saviour, *and there remembrest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave thy Gift before the Altar, and go and first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift*, Mat. 5. 14, 24. And as for the *Distribution of Alms* at this time; that, as we saw, was the *Apostolical way* in the *Love-Feasts*, as also in the *Collections for the Poor* as every *Man* had laid by him in store on the *First day of the Week* (when they always had a Sacrament) which St. Paul mentions, 1 Cor. 16. 2. And when these Feasts fail'd, yet these Collections and Offerings at the Lords Table still continued, and do in very many Places, which in this respect are fit to be Patterns to all others, unto this day.

And thus at last we see wherein consists the *Worthiness* of Eating and Drinking in this Holy Feast, and vvhhat Tempers and Dispositions in us are worthy of all those Ends, which are signified and designed by it. We must Eat and Drink in *Remem  
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*brance of Christ, and of his Dying for us, vvith Honour and Reverence, vvith a careful Concern to maintain and promote his Honour among others, vvith minfulness of his Commands, and Resolutions of Obedience, as he is Lord over us: vvith Love of him for his Kindness, and Delight in his Benefits, and thankful Acknowledgments, and grateful Returns for all his Favours, particularly his Dying on our account, as he so highly befriended, and infinitely obliged us: and vvith an humble sense of our own unworthiness, and an utter abhorrence of all our Sins, vvhich vvere the Causes of his Sufferings, and an intire Resignation of our selves, both Souls and Bodies, to his use, to be employed at his ovvn Purchase in vvhat he pleases, as his Death vvvas a Sacrifice for our Sins, vvherewith he bought and redeemed us. We must Eat and Drink in confirmation of the New Covenant, professing our hearty consent to it, and Resolution to stand by it, in all Sincerity and Faithfulness; coming to it vvith that Repentance of all our Sins, and those obedient Hearts vvhich vve profess; and vvith a full purpose after vvards to make good all vve promise. And, lastly, vve must Eat and Drink in confirmation of a League of Love and Friendship vvith all our Brethren, laying aside all Envy and Malice*  
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towards them, and making *Restitution* where we have wronged them,, and *forgiving* heartily where we have any *Grudge* against them, and giving *Alms* as our Ability and their *Necessities* shall require, and so being in perfect *Peace* and *Charity* with all Men.

And if we *believe all these things*, and are thereby carried on to *all these Tem- pers and performances*, we have that *Faith* which will render us *Worthy Communi- cants*, and acceptable to God at all other times. If we *believe Christ* to be our *Lord and Master*, and thereupon *Reve- rence, Honour, and Obey him*; if we *be- lieve him to be our best Friend and Bene- factor*, and thereupon *love him, and de- light in him, and are thankful to him*; if we *believe he shed his own Hearts Bloud* for our *Sins*, and for the *Redemption* of our *Souls*, and thereupon are *humbled with the sense of our own unworthiness*, and *ab- hor our Sins* which were so michievous, and *resign up both our Souls and Bodies wholly to his use*, as they are his own *Pur- chase*: If we *believe his Death* procured us the *Grace and Blessings of the New Co- venant*, which promises all *Believers Par- don upon Repentance*, and the *Spirits Help upon their own Endeavours*, and *Eternal Life on their intire Obedience*; and thereupon

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*heartily consent to it, and perform that Repentance and Obedience which are the Condition of it, and are faithful and sincere in our Promises and Resolutions to stand by it: And lastly, if we believe he requires us to love, and live in peace with all the World, and thereupon in this Sacrament confirm a League of Friendship with all our Brethren, laying aside all Enmity and Hatred, and being in perfect Charity with all Men: If we have all this Faith, I say, which, as appears, is thorowly exercised in this Sacrament; and can shew all these Fruits of it, in these Tempers and Performances being effected by it; we have that true, saving, justifying Faith the Scripture speaks of, which purifies the Heart, Act. 15. 9. and works by love, Gal. 5. 6. and is lively in Good Works, Jam. 2. 20, 26. And this will make us Worthy Communicants at this Feast, and welcom to God at all other times.*

# CHAP. III.

*A further Account of this Worthiness.*

## The Contents.

*These recited Tempers are all necessary in the Person Communicating, but not all necessary to be expressly exercised in the time of Communion. A Direction in which it may be fit to lay out our Devotion at that time. All these are provided for in the Churches Prayers, so that we may exercise them worthily if we go along devoutly at all the Parts of the Communion-Service.*

**I**N the former Chapter I have reckon'd up those Tempers which renders us *Worthy Communicants*, and fits us to be bidden Welcom at the *Lords Supper*, whensoever he invites and calls us thither.

But of them I must observe, That altho' they are all necessary in the *Person Communicating*; yet are they not all of necessity to be particularly and expressly exercised in the *Time of Communion*.

They are all necessary, I say, in the *Person Communicating*, and he is not worthy

to remember such a Lord and Saviour, to sign the New Covenant with Almighty God, and a League of Amity and Friendship with all the Christian World, who wants any of them. They are altogether *due* from us we have seen, and may in all reason be *expected* of us, as we stand in these *Relations*, and are admitted to these *Employments*: So that we act *unworthily*, and fail of our Duty, if our Souls are not endow'd vvith them, vvhen vve are in those Capacities, and about those Performances, vvhich do so justly challenge and call for them.

But they are *not all necessary* to be particularly and *expresly exercised* in the Time of Communion. They vvill be all implied 'tis true, and *virtually contained* in vvhat is then done; but they are not all necessary to be *particularly insisted on*. And for this there is a very good Reason, because that Time doth not ordinarily allowv sufficient Space for them. For most Communicants are not of such active Minds had quick Apprehensions, as that thay can pursue so many Busineses, or vvork themselves up into an express Fervour of so many particular Tempers at one Exercise. And those that are, chuse rather often-times to fix upon some fevv, that so, having the  
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more time to stay upon them, they may raise themselves up to greater Degrees, and act them over in much higher Measures. And because, where all cannot be exercised, it is of great use to know which are best and fittest to be singled out, I shall here set down which of all those Tempers I conceive it were most proper to stir up at that time, and vigorously to exert and heighten in our own Minds.

If any then, who come to the Holy Communion, find that they are either *tired out* with the *length*, or *distracted* by the *variety* of many Particulars, and that their Devotion in this Feast goes better on, and is more full and perfect when they restrain it to a *few*; I think they may do well to lay it out in these that follow.

In *remembering* our Saviour Christ, *vvho*, as then we are to believe, *died* for us, and purchased us the *New Covenant* by his Death, offering us the Pardon of our Sins upon Repentance, and his Grace and Spirit to help out our Endeavours, and Eternal Life upon our intire Obedience: In remembering him, I say, we may do well to shew,

1. A *joyful* and *affectionate Thankfulness* for this his unspeakable Love and Benefits,



nefits, particularly for his Dying for us.

2. *An intire Resignation of our selves,* both Souls and Bodies, *to his use,* as they are his own Purchase: In which *two* consists the main Worthiness of this Part, they being the Things which are most becoming us in this Remembrance.

And in *confirming the New Covenant* with Almighty God, whereto we must believe we are then invited, we may act,

3. *Repentance of all our Sins,* particularly of all those which we find are most apt to win upon us; and *make him Promises* that in all the Instances of Duty, but in them especially, we will joyn our Endeavours to his Grace, and obey his Laws: and when we promise this, it must be with a *sincere* and *faithful* Heart, and with full Intentions of Performance, which are the great Duty incumbent on us in these Engagements.

And in *confirming a League of Love and Friendship with all our Brethren,* which we must think we are then called to likewise, we may exercise,

4. *Charity towards all Persons,* forgiving all that have any ways offended us, and laying aside all Envy, Strife, and malicious Thoughts, and resolving to shew Kindness both in Word and Deed

to

to all about us, nay to all Men, as we have ability and opportunity, but the *Poor* especially, who ought not to be forgotten at such times; which is the Great Thing required of us, and becoming us in this part of the Service.

So that when we come to the Holy *Communion*, where we are called to *remember Christ*, particularly in his *Death*, to *seal the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Friendship with our Brethren*; we may do well to express our selves joyfully and affectionately thankful for all his Kindness, especially that in *Dying* for us, and *resign up our selves*, both Souls and Bodies, to his Service, and *repent of all our Sins*, making him faithful and unfeigned Promises of amending all our Faults, particularly those wherein we are most liable to do amiss, and shew our selves in *Peace* and *perfect Charity* with all Persons. By these things we shall duly answer the Ends of this Feast, and in them lies the great Worthiness of our Carriage at it. And this our Church has sufficiently intimated to us in her *Publick Catechism*, when in return to that *Question*, *What is required of them that come to the Lords Supper?* It gives this *Answer*; *To repent them truly of all their Sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new Life; to have a lively*

*Faith in Gods Mercy thro' Christ* (which, as we have seen, is thorowly exercised from the *beginning* to the *end* of this Holy Sacrament) *to have a thankful Remembrance of his Death, and be in Charity with all Men.*

When we come therefore to the Holy Sacrament, whilst the *Minister* himself is Communicating, or whilst *others* are Receiving, we may lay out our selves on these things, and spend the time in the Exercise of these Duties, acting them in Devout Prayers and Holy Meditations in our *own Hearts*. Or if we are not able of ourselves, but need the Help of others to suggest Thoughts, and to go along with us in this Service, let us joyn heartily in the *Churches Prayers*, which it has appointed for this purpose. For in them we have an Exercise of all these Virtues, and they have excellently provided for our Needs in this Case; so that we may duly express these Tempers, if we are careful to joyn fervently with the Minister in all the Parts of the *Communion-Service*. And because it may be of use to some, to see how all these Duties are exercised in it, that so, being aware of it, they may particularly design them when they come to it; I will shew it of them all particularly.

I. It

1. It leads us on to an affectionate *Thankfulness* and joyful *Praise*, the first great Qualification, in a strain which truly to me is most transporting. For thus it helps us to give Thanks before Receiving. *It is very meet, right, and our bounden Duty, that we should at all Times, and in all Places, give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God: Therefore with Angels, and Archangels, and all the Company of Heaven, we laud and magnifie thy Glorious Name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord most High.*

And thus again after it:

*Glory be to God on High, and in Earth Peace, and Good Will towards Men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorifie thee, we give Thanks to thee for thy great Glory, O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.*

*O Lord the only Begotten Son Jesu Christ, O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the Sins of the World, have Mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the Sins of the World, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the World, receive our Prayers. Thou that sitest at the Right Hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.*

*For thou art only Holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the Glory of God the Father.*

All which are words expressing joyful Praise and affectionate Thankfulness so meltingly, that better, I think, have not yet been thought of.

2. It leads us also to *resign up our selves*, both Souls and Bodies, to his Service, in the Prayer immediately after receiving in these words.

*And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our Souls and Bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion, may be fulfill'd with thy Grace and Heavenly Benediction.*

3. It leads us in professing an humble and hearty Repentance of all our sins, and making God our Faithful Promises of new Obedience, in the invitation to Communicate, and the Confession of Sin before receiving in these words.

*Ye that do truly and earnestly Repent you of your Sins, and intend to lead a new Life, following the Commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his Holy Ways; draw near with Faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your Comfort, and make your humble*  
*Confession*

*Confession to Almighty God, meckly kneeling upon your Knees.*

*Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by Thought, Word, and Deed, against thy Divine Majesty, &c. We do earnestly Repent, and are heartily sorry for these our mis-doings, &c.*

And to prepare us for this profession of Repentance in *this place* of the Service, I think it very adviseable to take what time there is, whilst the Bread and Wine are in preparing before the *beginning* of the Office to recollect our *particular* Sins which we are most liable to incur, and at *every one* of them to make God promises, and fix Resolutions of amending them in our own minds; after which we may the better say in *General* we Repent of them, and will no more Commit them, and thereupon beg *Pardon* for them, and receive *Absolution*, as it is in this part of the Service.

4. And lastly, it leads us to act *Peace* and *Charity* to all Men, when in the *Exhortation* before receiving, it tells us we must be in perfect *Charity* with all Men; and in the *invitation*, calls such as are in *Love* and *Charity* with all their Neighbours: At which

which words our hearts may strike in with it, and earnestly profess they at present are, and are fully resolv'd at all times after so to be.

Thus doth the *Church* it self in our *Publick Service*, go before us; and lead us on in these great Duties of joyful *Praise* and *Thankfulness*, of *Resignation* of our selves, of *Repentance* and *Faithful purposes* and *promises* of *Obedience*, and of *Charity* to all *Persons*, which are to render us welcom Guests, and vvorthy Communicants. Nay, it doth not only call us to, and bear us Company in these chief Duties, wherein above all consists a *Receivers worthiness*: but also in most others mentioned above, so that scarce any Duty is requir'd in us at this Feast, but, if our Hearts go along with it, it puts in act, and makes a place for it.

It exercises our humble sense of our own unworthiness in the Prayer before *Consecration*, in these words. *We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own Righteousness, but in thy manifold and great Mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the Crums under thy Table.* And so again in the Prayer after receiving in these. *Though we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer up unto thee any Sacrifice; yet humbly we beseech*

seech thee accept this our bounden Duty and Service; not weighing our Merits, but pardoning our Offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

It exercises our hatred and abhorrence of our Sins, which caused Christs Sufferings, in the Confession of Repentance in these. The remembrance of our mis-doings is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable.

And it exercises our Love, and Reverence, and Honour to Christ, either in words that express it, or in things that imply it, being real proofs and effects of it, in every thing that is done through the vvhole Service.

If every Receiver therefore that has these Tempers, doth but go along heartily and affectionately with the Churches Prayers, and joyn vvith the Minister and the Congregation in the Communion Service; he acts them over as he ought, and doth Honour to his Saviour, and is a vvorthy Communicant. He shewvs all those qualifications vvhich God has required, and receives as a vvorthy Guest, if he can do nothing more than go along, and strike in heartily at every part of the Publick Worship. Which I speak, not for the ease of those, vvho, either by their own invention, or the help of Books, can set their  
own



ovvn minds on vvork, and employ their ovvn Thoughts in meditating and acting over all these Tempers, vv whilst the Minister is distributing the Sacrament: I speak it not, I say, for the ease of these Persons, as if, beside vvhat they do in the Churches Prayers, they should not moreover do vvhat they can othervvise. But for the sake of others, who have not these abilities, that they may not be discouraged; and to let them know, that, if they are good Men, and *have* these Tempers, there is *exercise* of them sufficient in the *Publick Prayers*, were there nothing else from the help of *Books*, or their own *invention*, to make them *worthy Communicants*.

And thus we see wherein lies the *worthiness of receiving*, and what Virtues are fit for him to exercise, who would be a welcom Guest at the *Holy Communion*. When he *remembers the Death of Christ*, and *confirms the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Love and Friendship with all the Christian World*, by *eating Bread*, and *drinking Wine* according to Christs appointment; he must exercise himself in *joyful Praise*, and *affectionate Thanks*, and *Resignation of his whole man*, both Soul and Body, *to Christs Service*, and in *Repentance of all his Sins*, making God faithful Promises

mises of New Obedience, and in *Charity* towards all *Persons*: all vvhich he may express in joyning heartily with the *Churches Prayers*, besides vvhath he doth, vvhilst the Bread and Wine are in preparing, or vvhilst others are Communicating, in his *own Meditations*. And if he believes these things, and is carryed on by such belief to these Performances; he is vvclcom to the Table of his Lord, and may justly esteem himself a worthy Partaker of this Blessed Sacrament.

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## C H A P. IV.

*Worthy Receiving not extraordinary difficult, and of unworthiness to Communicate.*

## The Contents.

*To silence the Complaint of extraordinary difficulty of coming worthily to this Sacrament, three things noted. 1. All the particulars of worthy Receiving, are necessary parts of Duty, and of a good Man; so that no more is required to fit us for receiving, than is required to fit us to dye, or to go to Heaven. 2. They are all necessary Qualifications of an acceptable Prayer, Vow or Thanksgiving; so that no more is required to it, than to a worthy discharge of all other Acts of Religion. 3. However they may be commended, yet are they not necessarily required in more intense and transporting degree in it, than in other instances of Devotion. The only unworthiness, which can put us by this Ordinance, is Impenitence: if Repentance will go down with any man, nothing else need*

*need stick with him. This Point of Worthily Communicating summ'd up.*

HAVING hitherto shewn wherein lies the worthiness of receiving, and what those Qualifications are which fit us for this Holy Feast: I shall now only note some things, that may silence all good mens Complaints about the hardship of it, and shew plainly who are unworthy to joyn in it, and what they must do to fit and prepare themselves for it, and so conclude this Point.

1st, I shall note some things that may reconcile all good minds to this Feast, and silence their Complaints of the hardship, and extraordinary difficulty of coming worthily to partake in it. And this had need to be done, and may prove of great use when once it is done; because one chief thing, which causes even good People to come so seldom, is the apprehended difficulty, and extraordinary solemnity of the worthy receiving.

Now to satisfie all good Souls in this point, and to remove these hard thoughts of it, I would suggest to them these three things.

1st, That all these Tempers, which are required to a worthy Communion, are necessary parts of Duty, and of a good Man; so that no more is required of us to fit our selves for receiving, than is required to fit us to dye, or to go to Heaven.

2ly, That

2ly, That they are all required to a worthy Prayer, Vow, or Thanksgiving; so that no more Duties are required to our worthiness in it, than to our worthiness in all other Acts of Religion.

3ly, That however they may be commended, yet are they not necessarily required, as some have imagined, in more intense and transporting degrees in it, than in other instances of Devotion.

1st, I say all the Tempers, which I have mentioned as necessary to a worthy Communion, are necessary parts of Duty, and of a good Man; so that no more is required of us to fit our selves for a worthy receiving, than is required to fit us to Dye, or to go to Heaven.

They are all necessary parts of Duty, and of a good Man. It is necessarily required of every good Man, who would serve God

and be accepted with him, that he † *honour his Lord and Master Jesus Christ*, and be careful to \* *obey him*; that he be † *affectionately sensible of all the kindnesses*

he has done, particularly in dying for him, and most heartily

† *thank him for them*; that he be \* *humbled under the*

sense of his own sins, and utterly † *abhor them*; and

*resign*

† Phil. 2. 9, 10.

\* Luc. 6. 46.

† Jam. 1. 12.

† Eph. 5. 20.

† Matt. 5. 3.

† Prov. 8. 13.

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*resign up himself both*  
 \* Soul and Body, to his \* 1 Cor. 6. 12.  
 Saviours use, who with his 20.  
 own hearts blood has bought him; that,  
 having first \* Believed in \* Marc. 16. 16.  
*Christ*, he sincerely consent  
 and enter into the *New Covenant*, performing,  
 and promising that \* Re- \* Luc. 13. 3.  
 pentance, † *Gods endeavours*, † Phil. 2. 12.  
 and \* Obedience which are \* Heb. 5. 9.  
 required by it, in expectation of that  
*Forgiveness, Grace, and Happiness* which  
 are proposed in it; and  
 lastly, that he should \* lay \* Gal. 5. 20, 21.  
 aside all *envy, and malicious*  
*Thoughts*, and † *forgive In-*  
 juries, \* *repair Wrongs*, be † Mat. 6. 15.  
 at † *Peace*, and live in \* Ezek. 33. 14,  
 \* *Charity* with all the 15.  
 World. All these are Du- † Rom. 12. 18.  
 ties indispensably required by the *Gospel* \* Col. 3. 14.  
 of *Christ*, as appears by the places re-  
 ferr'd to in the *Margin*; they are no in-  
 different things, but absolutely necessary  
 in every *Christian*, who would secure his  
 Peace with God, and be sure at last to  
 go to Heaven. And they, as we have seen,  
 are the very things, which the *Worthi-*  
 ness of Communicating consists of. So  
 that to be *personally worthy* for the Com-  
 munion, is *nothing more*, than to be an ac-  
 ceptably

*ceptably Good and Religious man*: To have all those Virtues which constitute a *Saint*, and are necessary parts of that Obedience and Holy Living, which must get us all an *Interest in Christ*, and secure our *Title* to Salvation. And therefore if any man is contented with those Duties, which God exacts of him to make him a good Man; he has no cause to complain of those, which are necessary to a worthy Receiving. And if he doth repine at them, and refrain from the Lords Table, because he will not be at the pains to acquire them; 'tis plain, that 'tis not the *hardship of the Sacrament*, but of an *Holy Life*, that he is disturbed at; and the same difficulties that drive him from the *Communion*, if he understand himself, must drive him also out of his *Religion* and the way to *Heaven*.

2ly, *These Duties*, that are required to a *Worthy Receiving*, are required also to every *Worthy Prayer*, *Vow*, and *Thanksgiving*; so that no more Duties are required to our worthiness in it, than to our worthiness in all other acts of *Religion*. For unless a man *Repents* of all his *Sins*, and is in *Love and Charity* with all his *Neighbours*, and *Believes in Christ* and all his *Promises*, and is ready and resolv'd to obey all  
his

his *Commandments*; and, in one word, unless he is a *Good man*, which fits him for a worthy receiving: he is not more worthy to say his *Prayers*, to give *Thanks*, to make *Vows* to God, or seal *Covenants*, than he is to join in the Holy Communion.

He is not more worthy to say his *Prayers*; for to the acceptance of them all the same things are required of him. If I regard *Iniquity* in my heart, says the *Psalmist*, i. e. if I do not *Repent* of it, and turn away from it, the Lord will not hear me, *Psal.* 66. 18. And if men would pray as they ought, says *St. Paul*, and as they may hope to be heard, they must have both *Faith*, *Peace*, and *Innocence* to recommend their *Petitions*, or lift up holy hands, without wrath and doubting, *1 Tim.* 2. 8. If you forgive not men their *Trespases*, says our Saviour, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your *Trespases*. So that when ye pray say — forgive us our *Debts*, as we forgive our *Debtors*, *Mat.* 6. 12, 15. God says the same of an ill mans *Prayer*, that he doth of an ill mans *Communicating*, namely, that he is most unworthy in both, and shall receive a *Curse* instead of a *Blessing*. For as the *Unworthy*, i. e. as has been shewn, the *Wicked Receiver* (the *Worthiness* required being only that of a good man) eats and drinks his own damnation,  
1 Cor.



1 Cor. 11. 29. So is it said of the *Unworthy*, i. e. of the *wicked Petitioner* too, that *he who turns away his ear from hearing the Law, even his Prayer shall be an Abomination*, Prov. 28. 9. and 15. 8.

Thus is every man, that is *Unworthy* to receive the *Sacrament*, *Unworthy* also to pray to God, the same things being required to both of them: an *Impenitent* ill man, being utterly unfit for both, but a truly *Penitent Good Man*, being such as he accounts *worthy*, and most affectionately invites to them.

Nay he is not only *unworthy* to pray to God, but also, whilst that *impentence* lasts, to give him *Thanks*, to make *Vows*, to *Covenant* with him, or to have any *Entercourse* and *Communication* in any other actions of *Religion*. If he tells God he is *Thankful* for his *Mercies*, whilst in the constant course of his *Life* he *disobeys* him, his *Actions* plainly give the *Lye* to his *Words*, and proclaim him a most *Ungrateful* Person. If he makes him *Vows* and *Promises*, and *Covenants* to *Repent* of all his *Sins*, whilst he still *lives Impenitent*, and goes on in them; he only speaks him fair, intending no such thing, and therefore doth nothing else but *abuse* and *provoke* him. He doth nothing that *Honours* God as it should, so long as he is an *un-*  
godly

godly man, nor must hope in any Services or Religious Performances to be own'd and accepted by him. For God will have nothing to do with ill men in any way, whilst they continue impenitent in their sins; Christ has purchased no Reconciliation for such, nor will he, till they change that course, have any Friendship for, or take any Complacence in them. He will hear the Prayers, and accept the Thanks, and trust the Promises and Engagement of those only, who are fully resolv'd to amend their Lives, and become Good men: so that if any man persists impenitent, which unfits him for receiving, he is also unfit for every thing else, and unworthy to perform any other Actions of Religion.

As for this business of *worthy Communicating* then, there is no more cause of Complaint against *it*, for the *difficulty* and *hardship* of it, than there is against *all Religion*. The same Duties that are required to a worthy Receiving, are no less required to make any of us a Good man, to confer a Right to Heaven, to a worthy Prayer, Promise, or Thanksgiving. So that if any Man will not come to the Sacrament, because he is wicked, and will not be at the pains to attain those Virtues which are necessary to a worthy  
Com-

Communion: if he understand himself, he must for the same reason keep back from Prayer, and Praises, and all pretences to Religion. For unless he will labour after these Duties, and perform them, he is unmeet to come to God, and is very unworthy in all of them. And therefore so long as he is *unfit for the Sacrament*, he is *unfit for every thing else*, and, if he resolves to continue so, may as well resolve to renounce his *Baptism*, and the whole *Christian Profession*.

And as these Tempers, which are required to a worthy Communion, are no more than is required in every Good man, in every worthy Prayer, Praise, or other act of Religion: So is it to be observed,

3ly, That *however they may be commended, yet are they not necessarily required, as some have imagined, in more intense and transporting Degrees in it, than in other instances of Devotion.*

That which has deterr'd good People from the Sacrament, more than any thing besides, is *their too awful Sense and Veneration of it*, and placing it at too great a distance from other parts of Worship. They think no Virtues are worthy of it, but what are expressed in *Ecstasie and Transport*; and that when it requires the same Duties with other parts of Gods Service, it requires

quires them in *much greater Perfection*, and *far higher measures*. So that they imagine they may be worthy to Pray, and Praise God, though they are unworthy to Communicate: And therefore they joyn in *them* ordinarily as there is occasion for them, when, through the excess of Reverence, they scarce ever joyn in *this* at all.

But this is a great Mistake, which, though it be well meant, has a very ill effect, and affrights good Souls from performing this Duty and Service, and paying this Honour to their Saviour, when they have no cause to be afraid of it. For although it be *commendable*, and *desirable*, when it can be had; yet it is not *absolutely necessary* that so it should be.

It is *very Commendable*, I say, and *much to be Desired*, that we should exercise these *Temper*s in a higher Degree in this Holy Sacrament, than in other parts of Worship. It will be very well if our *Prayers* are more *servent*, and our *Praises* more *affectionate*, and all the *Virtues* we have place to exercise, more full and *flagrant* then, than at other times. For there we have *Christ's Death* represented, with the *hairousness* of our sins which caused it, and the *inestimable Benefits* that come by it; and we meet on purpose, to fix our Thoughts  
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and Contemplations on it. And that is the Consideration which gives greatest Force, and adds most Strength to all our Duties; so that when we have *most* of it, as we must have when we come for that very intent, it very well becomes us for the Honour of it to excel in them. And upon this account it will be very Commendable, and much to be Desired, that we should be more vigorous in all our Virtues at *this*, than at any *other* Ordinance.

But although this *be Commendable*, and *much to be Desired in us*; yet it is not *necessary*, or *indispensably required of us*, but that we *may Communicate worthily when 'tis otherwise*. For if we have these Tempers in *such a Degree*, as is *necessary to our Eternal Happiness*, we have so much of them as will render us worthy and welcome Guests at *this*, as well as at *every other Ordinance*.

And this is plain from hence, because when we have them in a *saving Degree*, which would procure our acceptance in other Parts of Gods Service, they fit us for the Communion of *Christ*, and *Glorified Saints in Heaven*; and so cannot leave us unworthy to Communicate with *him*, and *them* here on *Earth*. If we *savingly repent us of all our Sins*, and are *savingly thankful for all Christs Mercies*, and are *savingly*

vingly in Charity with all our Neighbours, and have a saving Faith in Christs Promises; whether these Virtues be at the pitch of the Strong, or only of the Weak in Faith, we are accepted with him, since he accepts both. And when once he accepts us, we may approach to him in any Place; when he allows of the measure of our Graces, we may be welcome to shew them forth, and offer a Sacrifice of a sweet smell, when we send them up to him in any, or in all the Parts of his Worship and Service.

Let a man come then to the Communion, though it be without any thing of extraordinary and unwonted Transports, and only in that ordinary exercise of these Virtues, which gains him acceptance in Prayer, or Praise, or other Religious Actions; and then let him not doubt, but that, although more were better, yet is this good, and will render him a worthy partaker of the Lords Supper.

And this we have great cause to believe the Ancient Christians thought, because they made it not an extraordinary and separate thing, as we do now, but an ordinary and constant part of the Christian Worship. It went usually along with the other Parts of the Service, and they that came to Prayers, came also to the Sacra-

ment; the same Preparation, and the same Persons, being admitted to it. Thus in the *Apostles* times, they met to *Communi- cate*, as they met to pray, every Day; and *breaking Bread*, was no less constant a part, than *Prayer*, and *Praise*, of their *Communion* and *Fellowship*. All the *Disci- ples* at *Jerusalem*, says *St. Luke*, continued stedfastly in the *Apostles Doctrine* and *Fel- lowship*, and in *breaking of Bread*, and in *Prayers*, *Act. 2. 42*. And again, They con- tinuing daily with one accord in the *Temple*, and *breaking Bread* from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness, and singleness of Heart, praising God, v. 46, 47. And af- terwards, when their Members increa- sed, and *Stated Days* were appointed for the publick service of God; on the first day of the Week, when they met for other Worship, the *Communion* alvvays went along vvith it. Thus 'tis plain it was in the *Apostles Days*, for then the *Sunday Worship* was expressed by *breaking Bread*; vvhich shewvs it was an ordinary and con- stant part of it. On the first day of the Week, says *St. Luke*, when the *Disciples* came to- gether to break Bread. *Act. 20. 7*. And thus also it continued for a good vvhile after vvards as is evident from the Ninth of the *Aposto- lical Canons*. And to shew hovv fit they esteem'd all the Faithful, vvwhether Weak or Strong

*Strong in Faith, who were worthy to joyn in other parts of Worship, to joyn also in this; that Apostolical Canon requires all the Faithful, who come to the other Service, to stay the Communion, and joyn in that also †. All the Faithful, that come to Church and hear the Scriptures, but stay not to joyn in the Holy Communion and the Prayers for that Service, ought to be separated and shut out from the Lords Table, as they that bring Confusion into the Church. And the like is also injoyn'd in the Council of Antioch. \* All that come to Church, say they, & hear the Scriptures, but do not Communicate in the Peoples Prayers, but turn away disorderly from the Eucharist, shall be Excommunicated and expell'd from the Church, and not received again, till they confess their Fault, and shew Repentance for it.*

*πὸ μετανοίας. Concil. Antioch. Can. 2.*

† Πάντας τοὺς εἰσόντας πρὸς, καὶ τῶν γενομένων ἀκούοντας, μὴ παρεμύχοντες δὲ τῇ προσευχῇ, καὶ τῇ ἁγίᾳ μεταλήψει ὡς ἀταξίας ἐμπαύοντες τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ σπορεύουσιν. γρη. Canon. 9. Can. Apostol.

\* Πάντας τοὺς εἰσόντας εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ τὴν ἱερὴν γενομένην ἀκούοντας, μὴ κοινῶν ὄντας, δὲ εὐχῆς ἅμᾱ τὸ λαῶν, ἢ ἀποτρέφοντες τὴν ἁγίαν μεταλήψιν τὴν εὐχαριστίαν καὶ πᾶσι ἀποξίαν, τότε ἀποβλήτες γίνονται τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἕως ἂν ἐξομολογησώμενοι, καὶ μετανοήσας καὶ



And thus we see, however *Commendable* it may be, that People come to this Holy Sacrament with more Intense Acts, and higher Preparation, than would serve to any other parts of Worship; yet is it not *necessary* they should do it. They may be welcome and Worthy Partakers in this Ordinance, who are worthy to partake in others; so that they are fit for it, who are fit for any other Religious Service. The *same Virtues*, and the *same Degrees* suffice to it. For they fit them to Communicate with *Christ* and *Glorified Saints in Heaven*, and so must needs fit them to Communicate with *him*, and *them here on Earth*. They fitted Christians for it in the *Apostles times*, when the *Eucharist* was no *extraordinary* and *separate*, but an *ordinary constant part* of the *Christian Worship*. For then not only they whose Virtues were most *high* and *perfect*, but *all the Faithful* were call'd upon to Communicate, and they who were judg'd fit to meet at the Prayers and other Services, were thought Worthy to meet at the Lords Table too. And since they fitted *them* for it in those Days, it cannot be thought but that they must needs fit us in ours also.

As for those then who have been wont  
to

to think more hardly of the Sacrament than of other parts of Worship, and, how frequent soever they were in them, to come but seldom unto it, by reason of the apprehended difficulty in a Worthy partaking of it: If they duly consider these *three* things, they will see cause to change their mind, and forbear to complain any more against it. For *the Virtues that are required of us in a worthy Communion, are all necessary parts of Duty, and of a Good man; and are as much required to a worthy Prayer, Vow, Thanksgiving, and every other act of Religion; and are not necessarily required in more intense and transporting Degrees in it, than in other instances of Devotion.* So that no Good man has any cause at all to repine at it, or abstain from it. It lies hard upon, and can be blamed by none but those, who, for the same Reason, must blame every other Ordinance and part of Divine Service, which requires as much of a worthy Worshipper as this; and who, at the same Rate, as they cast off it, must renounce their Christianity, and throw aside all Religion too.

And thus having noted some things, that may help to reconcile all good minds to this Blessed Sacrament, and silence the Complaints of hardship in a

worthy receiving it : I shall proceed now,  
2ly, To shew plainly who are unworthy  
of it, and what they must do to fit and pre-  
pare themselves for it, and so conclude this  
Point.

Now these, in one word, are all that  
are impenient, that have committed any  
Damning Fault, and are not fully set and  
purposed to amend it. For all the Virtues  
of Worthy Receiving, as we have seen,  
are necessary Parts of Duty, and of a  
Good man ; so that if any Person, would  
Repent of all his breaches of them, and  
take care thenceforward to endow his  
Soul with them, he would be worthy to  
be entertained at this Feast, and fit to be  
bidden welcome. Besides, if *Repentance*  
and *forsaking all his Sins* will go down  
with him, there is no man who pretends  
to Religion, but may perform every thing  
else, which is required to this Communi-  
on. For there would be no great diffi-  
culty in paying *Christ Honour* and *Reve-  
rence*, and following him with *Love* and  
*Thankfulness*, and resigning our selves up to  
his use, and abhorring of our Sins, if *Re-  
pentance* and *Reformation* were not annex-  
ed to them. Men could *Love Christ* heart-  
ily, and *Thank him* freely, and *Honour*  
him abundantly, and resign themselves up  
to him wholly, and Believe in him chearfully,  
if

if he would not peremptorily require them to *amend their ways*, and *for sake their sins*, which are the things they place their chiefest Pleasure and Delight in. So that if any man will not fit himself for Receiving, it is not for the difficulty of other Duties, as if he could not brook them, but only for the difficulty of Repentance, so that *impenitence* is truly at the bottom. He will not *satisfie those who have suffered by him*, or *forgive those who have injured him*, or be at *Peace and Charity with all Men*, or *renounce that Injustice, Lasciviousness, Drunkenness*, or other *known sin*, Which, in confirming the New Covenant, he must promise God he will depart from. It is because his Heart sticks to some of *these*, or some other such like Transgressions, and will not go off from them, that he is an unfit and unworthy man; whereas, were it not for this, he could do all things else that are required of him.

He therefore, that is unworthy to Communicate, and unfit to receive the Sacrament, is plainly one that is *impenitent*; that is guilty of some Damning Sin, and is not resolv'd to leave, but intends still to continue in it. He is either a *careless Man*, that lives at large in a constant course of *Sensuality and Worldliness*, being wholly given to *heap up Wealth*, or

*aim at Honour, or follow Pleasure without Conviction, or making any pretence to serious Religion: Or, if he seems to look towards God, and is careful in many things to please him, he serves him not in all points as he ought, but allows himself in some known Sin, continuing unreclaimed in common Swearing, Drunkenness, Uncleanness, Malice, Contentiousness, Fraud, Oppression, Slander, Censoriousness, Evil-speaking, or some other Damning Crime, which he will not be at the pains to leave for Christs sake, or for any thing that he either has, or would do for him.*

Now if any one of those, who read this Treatise, are such as these, and I put the matter to their *own Consciences*; I confess they are not worthy to come to the Sacrament till they turn away from such a known Fault, and Repent of it, and would sin against this Holy Feast and their own Souls if they should do it. But then I must tell them withal, that as they are not fit to come to this Ordinance, so, whilst they continue in that Estate, neither are they fit to come to any other, or to any thing else that looks towards God, and their own Eternal Happiness. For so long as they thus espouse *any Number, or any one Sin* against God, and daily repeat it when they have a Temptation to it,

it, notwithstanding their own Hearts are sensible he has forbid it, or at least would have been sensible of it, unless they had been wilfully blinded, or by long use harden'd in it: So long, I say, as they are thus *Impenitent in any known Sin*, they are not only *unfit to come to the Communion*, but also as *undt to Dye*, or to *go to Heaven*, to *Pray to God*, to *uter Praise*, to *make Vows*, or to *joyn in any other actions of Religion*. For an *Impenitent* man, whilst he continues such, is Gods *Profest Enemy*, and is welcom to him at no time but when he *Repents*; so that till that is done, he is acceptable in no Service which he pays him.

This then is the danger of their State, who lye *Impenitent in many*, or in *few known Sins*: they are unworthy indeed to receive the Communion; but they are equally unworthy to joyn in Prayers, to give Thanks, or make Vows, or dye in Peace, or hope for Happiness, or do any thing else that shews them to be Christians.

And if any mans Conscience tells him, this is *his State*; his way is not to think there is no harm, if he doth but *abstain from the Communion*; for, as I say, he is as unworthy in his Prayers, and Praises, and every thing else that belongs to Religion:

ligion: but *forthwith to Repent*, and *amend that Fault* which shuts him out from the Sacrament, and every thing else that looks towards Heaven, that so he may be a Worthy and Welcome Guest in it, and all of them. This Repentance will restore him to the Favour of God, and gain him acceptance with him; and then he is fit for this, and for every other part of Gods Worship, and may worthily joyn in them.

And by this it appears who is unworthy of this Feast, and what he must do to fit and prepare himself for it. Every man that is Impenitent, is an Unworthy Communicant; but if he will Repent and Amend his ways, he will find no difficulty in other Duties which make up a Believers worthiness, but may then be a Worthy and Welcom Guest whensoever he has a mind to come to it.

And thus I have done with the *Second* thing I proposed, namely to shew *wherein lies the worthiness of Eating and Drinking at this Feast*; which I have stayed the longer upon, because both the *irreverent approach* of some men to it, and the *scrupulous abstaining* of others from it, do both take rise from this head, so that it well deserves to be carefully Explained and clearly Stated. And the Result of  
all

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all that I have said upon this Point is this:

When we come to *Eat Bread and Drink Wine* at the *Lords Table*, in remembrance that *Christ dyed for us*, and in Confirmation of the *New Covenant* which his Death procured us, and in Ratification of a *League of Love and Friendship* with all our Neighbours; we must be careful devoutly to Exercise, and act over these Tempers. We must remember our *Dying Lord*, with Honour, and Love, and joy, and Thankfulness, and Resignation of our selves, both Souls and Bodies to his Service, and humble Sense of our own unworthiness, and Detestation of our Sins which caused his Suffering. We must confirm the *New Covenant* which his Death purchased, in consenting heartily to the Terms of it, Repenting of all our Sins, and faithfully promising that intire Obedience which is required in it, and then Believing that for *Christs sake* we shall be saved by it. And we must Confirm a *League of Love and Friendship* with all the *Christian World*, in laying aside all Envy and Hatred, and forgiving those that have injured us, and making just amends to those who have been wronged by us, and giving Alms as our Ability and our Brethrens necessity requires, and so being in Peace and Perfect Charity with all Persons.

If we are able to grasp so many particulars



particulars in our minds, and to act them all over duly, and as we ought, at this Exercise; it may be fit to Solemnize this Feast in *all these* instances of Virtue. But if either our minds would be lost and burdened, or our Devotions enfeebled by the *Number* of these particulars; 'twill yet be fit at least to express our selves *Joyfully* and *affectionately Thankful* for his kindness, especially in *Dying for us*, and *Resign up our selves* both Souls and Bodies to his Service, and *Repent of all our Sins*, making him Faithful Promises that we will amend all our Faults, particularly those which oftneft win upon us, and shew our selves in *perfect Peace* and *Charity with all Persons*.

All these, whilst the Bread and Wine are in preparing, or whilst others are Communicating, they who have *Books* to suggest Thoughts, or are able to supply them out of their *own minds*, may exercise by themselves. And they who cannot, as also they who can, may exercise them in joyning fervently with the *Churches Prayers*, all these Duties, as we have seen, being so well led on and exemplified in the *Communion Service*. Wherein, because there will be some interruption whilst others are Communicating, that that time may not lye idle upon

on their hands, I think it very adviseable for them to joyn heartily in the Prayer which is made at the offering of the Bread and Wine to their Brethren, (as they will be sure to do when it comes to their own turn) if their Devout Zeal is not otherwise taken up by the *Psalm*, which, at their *Pastors* Discretion, is wont to be Sung at that time for the employment of those who have done Receiving.

These Virtues being in us, and, at the time of Receiving, being thus exercised by us, both in our *own private*, or at least in our *Devout Concurrence with the Churches Prayers*, make a worthy *Communion*.

And this no man who pretends to Religion ought to *Complain* of, or think an hard Imposition. For all *these Duties*, which are necessary to a *worthy Communion*, are as necessary to make every one of us a *Good man*, or *fit to Dye*, or to *go to Heaven*; they are as necessary to a *worthy Prayer*, *Thanksgiving*, *Vow*, or *any other Act of true Religion*; and are not necessarily required in more intense *Degrees* and *transporting Measures* in this, than in other parts of *Worship and Devotion*.

These things then are necessary to a worthy Receiving, and no Good man can complain that they are so, since they  
are

are equally necessary to all acceptable Goodness, to all comfortable Hopes, and to every other Ordinance, to all the parts of Worship and Religion, and to Gods being pleased with us in every thing that is either the *Duty*, or *Privilege* of a Christian.

And as the *Presence*, and *Exercise* of *these* Virtues make us worthy of the Communion; so doth the *absence* of *them*, but especially of *Repentance* of all our known Sins, (which is the thing, if any, that will be wanting, and which is the cause why others are, Impenitence, as we saw, being at the bottom of all Unworthiness) make us *unworthy* and most *unwelcome*. If we continue Impenitent in *many*, or in *any one known Sin*, we are indeed unworthy to Communicate; but then withal we are as unworthy to be thought Good men, to go to Heaven, to say our Prayers, to make Vows, or to have any Dealings with God in any other Actions of Religion. And the way for any Wise man in that Case, is not to take up with abstaining from the Communion, for he ought as much to abstain from Prayer, and Praise, and every other Office of a Christian, God being pleased with him in none of them; but forthwith to Repent and Abandon such ill Course, that so he may be a welcome

come Guest, and worthy to partake of them.

And thus having endeavoured to give some help to all those who desire *worthily to Communicate*, by shewing what is the meaning of *Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament*, and wherein lies the *worthiness of doing it* : I shall proceed now in the third Place to exhort and press men on to it, by shewing them how much it is every good Christians Duty to frequent it, and how great the Benefits are that come by it, which should make them seek to it of themselves were it not commanded, of which in the next Part.

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PART II.

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## PART II.

### CHAP. I.

#### *Of the Duty of Communicating.*

#### The Contents.

*To Communicate is a Duty incumbent on us, as appears, 1. From the obliging import of the Command about it. This Command of Christ shewn, and several Notes added, which greatly recommend and enforce it. viz. It is such an Instance, as best shews our peculiar Reverence and Love to him; the whole yoke of Jewish Ceremonies is taken away, and only it, and Baptism, two cheap and easie Kites, imposed instead of them; it was his last Command, he gave it the Night before he suffered; in St. Paul's Commission to Preach the Gospel,*  
it

it was particularly specified; without greatest Danger to our selves it cannot be neglected, as appears from our Saviours words, Joh. 6. 53. which are shewn to speak of it; and from the Danger of Neglecting the Jewish Passover, which answered to it. 2. From the obliging Nature of those things which are meant by it, viz. Because we therein publicly own Christ and his Religion, and solemnly remember him, and confirm the New Covenant with God, and a League of Friendship with our Brethren, and are vouchsafed the highest Honour, and receive Tokens of greatest Love, and enjoyment of present Graces, and pledges of future Glory from him: all which no Good man ought, and no Ingenuous man will Decline, when he is call'd to them. This Duty obliges those only who are of Age for it, and them too only at such times as they have an Opportunity and a fit Occasion offered. An Objection against its being a Duty from 1 Cor. 11. 25. answered. The Neglect of it is a great Sin. This God may excuse in those good Souls, who through Ignorance or Error are held back, and because of their over-high Veneration for it think themselves unworthy to come to it, whilst in the honesty of their Hearts they thus mistake it. But he will not excuse it in them when they

*they are better inform'd; and much less in others, who neglect it because they are careless of it, or too Wicked and Impenitent to receive it.*

**T**He worthy receiving of the Sacrament, which I have hitherto Described, is no *Indifferent thing*, which may either be *done*, or *let alone* according to Discretion; but an *indispensable Duty*, wherein God has straitly bound, and which he has peremptorily required of every grown Christian. •

And this will appear these two ways.

1<sup>st</sup>. From the *Expressness, and Obliging import of the Command* about it.

2<sup>ly</sup>. From the *Obliging Nature of those things which are meant by it.*

1<sup>st</sup>, That every Christian ought to frequent the Holy Sacrament, and come to it when he is call'd and an opportunity is offered, appears from the *expressness, and obliging import of the Command* about it. For our Blessed Lord has given us his *Command* for it, and that with such *particular Notes and Circumstances*, as shews he lays a great weight upon it, which must needs oblige all, that have any regard to him, to frequent it.

*He has given us, I say, his express Command for it.* For thus St. Paul tells us,  
he

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he enjoined, whe he Ordained this *Feast*. He took *Bread*, says he, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my *Body* which is broken for you; this *DO* in Remembrance of me. And after the same manner he took the *Cup*, saying, This *Cup* is the *New Testament* in my *Blood*; this *DO* ye, as often as you Drink it, in remembrance of me. 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. And if we had nothing more than this plain Command for it, it were enough to make every man, who would please God, and go to Heaven, to come to it when he is invited. For then ye are my *Friends*, says Christ, when ye do whatsoever I Command you. Joh. 15. 14. And he that shall break the least of my *Commandments*, and shall teach men so, shall be least in the *Kingdom of Heaven*: i. e. he shall not enter, or have any share at all there, Mat. 5. 19.

But besides this *express Command* which he has given for it, we have other *Notes* and *Circumstances* added, which greatly recommend it, and shew that he lays a particular weight upon it. For it is a thing, which is to be done purely upon his account, and has only our *Love* of him to enforce it; so that if we have any *Love* and *Reverence* for him, this is the best way to shew it: it, and *Baptism*, are the only  
positive



positive Commands he has given us, in exchange for the Numerous, and Expensive Jewish Ceremonies; so that in all Ingenuity and Thankfulness for so great a Benefit we ought to observe it: It was his Dying, and last Command, he gave it the very Night before he Suffered: it was thought by him a Command so material, that in St. Paul's Commission to Preach the Gospel it was not omitted, but particularly specified: And lastly, it is a Command which, as the Scripture plainly intimates, without great danger to our selves cannot either be unworthily kept, or neglected.

1<sup>st</sup>, It is a thing which is to be done purely upon this account, having no other Reason but his Command to bind and enforce it; so that if we have any Love and Reverence for him, this is the best way to shew it. As for the Duties of Humility, Temperance, Justice, Faithfulness, Gratitude, Charity, Peace, Prayers to God, and the like: Though Christ has told us of them, and expressly enjoyn'd them, as well as this; yet is not he alone in that, but they were sufficiently proclaimed before he came to the Jews by Moses and the Prophets, and to the Gentile World by Natural Conscience. In declaring them, he had an open way made for him, and the Consciences of all men ready to strike in with him,

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him, which, among all good Minds, would much facilitate their Reception, but in *this* Command, he stands alone; for *Natural Reason* knows nothing of it, nor will the Conscience of any man, but a *Christian*, oblige him to it. So that here we have no Light but his Word, no Motive but our Obedience to him to persuade it; and therefore if we do it at all, it must be purely for his sake, without any other Inducement.

And this is a strong Bond upon all that *Love their Lord*, and have any *peculiarity of Respect for him*, to observe it. It is the true Cause and Reason, indeed, why some neglect it, who, because their own Conscience doth not startle at it, and check them so severely for absenting from this Feast, as for Drunkenness, Whoredom, Lyes, Cheating, &c. which have not only *Christs Laws*, but *Natural Reason* also to exclaim against them, go on securely in their contempt of it. And if men have no Love for their Lord, no peculiar Regard for any thing because he has injoyn'd it, or are not duly inform'd of his Command about it, thus it will be. But if any that see he has made it their Duty, have any peculiar Love and Regard to him; they will greedily embrace this as the best Opportunity of shewing  
their

their Affection to his Service, since there-  
in they can be sway'd by nothing else,  
and most readily Communicate, when he  
calls them so to do.

2ly. *It and Baptism*, those two cheap  
and easie Things, are the only positive Com-  
mands he has laid upon us, when he took off  
the heavy yoke of the Numerous, Expensive,  
and Laborious Jewish Precepts; so that out  
of Natural Equity, and to shew our Thank-  
fulness for such a gainful Exchange, we  
ought most readily to observe it.

The Jews were loaded with a number  
of Troublesome and Expensive Rites, which  
had no Goodness discernable in them-  
selves, nor any thing, but the Revela-  
tion made by Moses, to recommend them  
to their Consciences: Such

- † Levit. 11. 7. as the † forbearing Swine  
and several sorts of Flesh;  
the washing of their Bodies
- \* Numb. 19. 13. upon their \* touching of any  
Dead Persons, and upon
- † Levit. 15. any † Corporal Uncleannef-

the bringing Offerings and Sacrifice of Fed  
Beasts at return of Thanks, and for Propi-  
tiation upon any Offences; and many other  
cumberfome and costly Rites, which the  
Apostles call the Law of Carnal Command-  
ments, Heb. 7. 16. and 9. 10. and weak  
and beggerly Elements, Gal. 4. 9. which  
were

were given them, not because the things deserv'd it, but only that they might be kept imploy'd, as useles Exercises are to Children, to hinder them from more hurtful Work; and so were suited only to the *Infancy, and Non-age of the World*, Gal. 4. 3.

But from all this *Burden of Ceremonies*, under which, as St. Peter says, they and their Fathers groaned and were oppress'd, Acts 15. 10. by the coming of Christ we are most graciously delivered. For he has abolish'd in his Flesh, i. e. by his Death, wherein he gave his Body for us, the Law of Commandments contain'd in Ordinances, Eph. 2. 15. He has blotted out the handwriting of Ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, (hedging in the Church within the Jews, and excluding all us Gentiles) and took it out of the way, nailing it to his Cross, Col. 2. 12. All this Law of Jewish Ceremonies he has abrogated, and procured us a compleat liberty and exemption from it, injoining us only these two cheap and easie Rites, of Baptism and the Lords Supper, instead of it. And if any man has but Common Ingenuity, and will return Equitably for what is done, and much more if he has any grateful Resentments for so valuable an Exemption, he must needs submit with all Thankfulness to this gainful Exchange and Imposi-

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tion, and run to it with as much forwardness, as any man would to pay *Twelve pence* in full Discharge of *Twenty pound*.

3ly, It was his *Dying and last Command*, he gave it the very Night before he suffered. The same night, says St. Paul, in which he was betray'd, he took Bread, and said, Take, eat, this do in remembrance of me, 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24. And this, had it come only in the Nature of a Request, and not with the Authority of a Command, must needs have made it of greatest Power with us. For it is great *Inhumanity*, and shews an *hard Heart*, to deny the last Suit of a Dying Person, though he were a Stranger to us; and base *Ingratitude*, and a Falsification of all Friendship to throw back the last Request of a Dying Friend, especially if he is before hand with us, and has done much more than his Request comes to for our sakes; and the greatest aggravation of all Disobedience to sleight the last Will and Words of our Fathers, or Masters, or others that have Right over us, and Power to Command us. And therefore since our Blessed Lord, who came upon Earth for no other end but to do us Service, yea even to lay down his Life for our sakes, after all the Pains and Cost he has been at for us, left this as his last Will, and both *intreated* and *in-*  
joynd

joyn'd at parting, that we should eat and drink in Remembrance of him: if we have any shame we cannot, and if we profess any Duty we dare not, and if we have any Love for him we will not neglect it, but come to it out of mindfulness of our gone Friend and departed Lord, as oft as we shall have opportunity so to do.

4ly, It was thought by Christ a Command so material, that when St. Paul received his Commission to Preach the Gospel, it was by name inserted, and particularly specified; and this special Designation of it shews that he was more than ordinarily concerned for it. *I have received of the Lord*, says he, or by his Revelation, when I was call'd by him, that which I also delivered unto you, as from him, namely, that the same night he was betrayed, he took Bread, and said, Take, eat this is my Body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me, 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24.

5ly, It is a Command, which, as the Scripture plainly intimates, without great danger to our selves cannot either be unworthily kept, or neglected.

Without very great and apparent danger to our selves, we cannot come Unworthily to the Sacrament. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, says St. Paul, eats and drinks Damnation to himself, 1 Cor. 11. 29.

And without a like danger we cannot neglect,

lest, or keep back from it. Except ye eat the *Flesh of the Son of Man*, says our Saviour, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you, Joh. 6. 53. This the *Ancient Church*, as is well known, understood generally of eating his *Flesh in the Holy Sacrament*; which is the great Reason they give for that Practice so common among them, namely, why *Infants are to be Communicated*. And of this there is great cause to understand it. For 'tis hard to think of any thing, that can support such full Expressions, as eating of his Body, and drinking of his Blood; besides eating Bread, and drinking Wine in the Sacrament; which he calls his Body and his Blood when he institutes it, *Matth. 26. 26, 27, 28*. And besides, in this very place he directs us to his Body Crucified, and given for the Life of the World; to shew the Eating relates to it as so represented, which is no where done but in the *Eucharist*. *I am the living Bread*, says he, which whoso eats shall live for ever: and the Bread which I will give, i. e. to be eaten, is my Body Crucified, which under that Notion is represented only in the Sacrament, or my *Flesh which I will give for the Life of the World*. And except ye thus eat the *Flesh*, and drink the *Blood of the Son of Man*, ye have no Life in you, Joh. 6. 51, 52, 53.

This

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This Discourse, indeed, of *eating his Flesh in the Sacrament*, was before the Sacrament it self was *instituted*. But so was his Discourse of *Baptism* to *Nicodemus*, before *Baptism* was appointed for the *standing Rite*, whereby all Mankind should be *Christned*, Joh. 3. 5. And so was his Discourse to the People, of the *Death he should dye*, by being *lifted up*, before he was *Crucified*, Joh. 12. 32, 33. And so was his Discourse of *raising up the Temple of his Body after it should be destroyed*, before he was *raised from the dead*, Joh. 2. 19. 21. And so in *this very place* was his Discourse of *giving his Flesh for the Life of the World*, which they understood not before he *suffered*, more than they did this *Sacramental eating* of it before the *Sacrament* was appointed, Joh. 6. 51. Our Saviour spake several things by *Anticipation* in *sundry places*, as, from this *last instance*, 'tis plain he did in *this*, which though his Hearers did not at that time fully understand, yet they would afterwards. So that when other Reasons evince him to have spoke in this place, of the *Sacramental eating* of his Body and Blood; the *Sacrament's* not being yet *instituted*, is no good Proof or Argument against it.

Thus is this necessity of *eating his Flesh*,



and drinking his Blood, as ever we would hope for Eternal Life by it, spoke of the Lords Supper, wherein we Feast upon it. And that it should be so, has no wonder in it: For it is no more than is expressly spoke of Baptism, which is but of equal Rank with it, both being alike Duties, and equally required. For of that tis said, *He that Believes, and is Baptized, shall be saved*, Marc. 16. 16. And except a man be born again of Water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, Joh. 3. 5.

But besides this Proof of the danger of neglecting the Sacrament, because our Lord tells us we have no Life in us without it; it may also appear from the danger of neglecting the Jewish Passover, which answered to it, and was the same to them, as this

Feast is to us, wherein

† 1 Cor. 5. 7. † *Christ our Passover is Sacrificed for us.* And as for

the danger of neglecting that, it was great indeed, no less than of being cut off from Israel, which was the punishment God had threatned to it. *Whosoever, in the Feast of the Passover, eats leaven'd Bread, from the First day to the Seventh day, that Soul shall be cut off from Israel*, Exod. 12. 15.

Thus necessary is it for all men; who would please God, to frequent this Ordinance, and to come to the Holy Sacrament

crament when they are call'd to it. They have *Christs express Command* for it, who; by injoyning it, has required Obedience in such an instance, as best shews their particular Reverence and Love to him; and to engage them the more to it, has freed them from all the load of Jewish Ceremonies, and imposed no heavier burden, than it and Baptism instead of them; and to make it have the more effect, has left it among the last words, which he spake to them; and to shew it was a matter of no small moment, would have it expressly specified in St. Paul's Commission; and tells them, That unless they come therein to eat his Flesh, and drink his Blood, they have no Life in them; and will punish the neglect; or abuse of it, as he did of the Jewish Passover which answer'd to it, with Excision: All which shew the Greatness of the Duty, and how much it is every mans Concern, who would hope to have the Favour of God, or go to Heaven.

And as this appears from the obliging Import, and Expressness of the Command about it; so doth it,

2ly, From the obliging Nature of those things which are meant by it. For therein we publicly own Christ and his Religion, and solemnly remember him, and confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God, and a League of Friendship with our Brethren,

and are vouchsafed the highest Honour, and receive Tokens of the greatest Love, and injoyment of present Graces, and Pledges of future Glories from him: all which no Ingenious man will, and no Good man ought to refuse, when he is call'd to them.

1<sup>st</sup>, In the Sacrament, I say, we publicly own Christ, and profess his Religion. This was always understood to be the meaning of Feasts on Sacrifices, both among Jews and Gentiles; they that would eat of the Sacrifice offer'd to any God or Idol, were looked on to have Fellowship and Communion with him, and thereby to own their joyning in that Worship and Service, which was paid to him. They join'd themselves to Baal-Peor, says the Psalmist, when they ate the Sacrifices of the Dead, i.e. when they Feasted on those Sacrifices which were offer'd to them, *Psal.* 106. 28. and *Num.* 25. 1, 2, 3. Thus St. Paul tells us it was in the Sacrificial Feasts of the Jews, for they that ate of their Sacrifices were partakers of their Altars. And thus he tells us it was among the Gentiles, and that they who Feasted in the Idol-Temples on the Sacrifices made to Devils, did thereby declare their Communion with them, and had Fellowship with Devils. And the same is true of the Feast of the Lords Supper, which upon this account, he makes paral-  
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lel to, and compares with them. In *Israel after the Flesh*, says he, *they who eat of the Sacrifice* are sharers in the Worship, or *Partakers of the Altar*. And in the things which *the Gentiles Sacrifice to Devils*, *they who Feast on the Sacrifices, have Fellowship with Devils*. And therefore you that Feast with the Lord at his Table, and thereby have Fellowship with him, must not mix Light and Darknes, Christ and *Belial* together, and by Feasting with Devils at theirs, have Fellowship with them too. *You cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils; you cannot be partakers of the Lords Table, and the Table of Devils*; since that were to unite the most opposite Interests, by holding Fellowship, and professing your selves to be the Servants of Christ, and of the Devil also, *1 Cor. 10. 16, 18, 20, 21*. Our joyning in the Holy Communion, is our avow'd owning of Faith in our Crucified Lord, and of our adherence to him. By eating at his Table of *broken Bread*, and *Wine poured out*, which are the Representation of his *Death*; we tell it out to all the World, that we are the Servants of that Lord, and Worshippers of that *Jesus*, who gave himself to be Crucified and to Dye for us. *As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, saith St. Paul, ye do shew*

*forth the Lords Death till he come. Ye shew forth his Death, i. e.*

\* Καταγγέλλετε. ye \* tell it abroad, and profess to all the World, that he dyed for you, and is Lord over you, and that you own him so to be, 1 Cor. 11. 26.

Thus is our eating Bread, and drinking Wine at the Lords Table, an open profession of his Religion, and a Token whereby we give out to all the World, who see what we do, that we belong to him. It is a most solemn sign of our Relation to Christ, and a publick Badge of our being Christians. And this sure no man will decline when there is a fit occasion, who is not ashamed of his Lord, nor Repents of his Profession. But if he is really a Follower of Christ, and would be thought one; he will let all the World know it by joyning in this Feast, which is the most Solemn Badge, and Authentick Mark, which Christ has appointed of it.

2ly, In coming to the Holy Sacrament, according to our Lords appointment, we solemnly remember him, and think of the Relation wherein we stand, and of the benefits which we have received from him. *Do this,* says he, *in remembrance of me,* 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.

And when he is call'd to remember his most precious Saviour, who has both lived

lived and dyed to make God his Friend, and to do him Service; there is no man sure, that has any thing of *Shame*, or *Ingenuity* left in him, who will shew backwardness, and begin to make excuses. For has not he done enough for us, to deserve to be thought of? Do not all the inexpressible Favours he has gain'd, and all the exquisite Pains he underwent for our sakes, most justly challenge to be held in remembrance? He left *unutterable Glories*, and submitted to *all sorts of Earthly Calamities*, and took *unwearied Pains*, and shewed *Indivincible Patience*, and laid down at last his *own Life* to save our Souls: and must all this be forgotten now tis done, and quite buried in silence? What man of any *Ingenuity*, that has been happy in such a *Friend*, can be averse to remember him? What man, that has been blessed in such a *Saviour*, can ever decline the Thoughts of him? Unless we will shew our selves *grossly stupid*, or *intolerably proud*, and *both ways Monsters of Ingratitude*; we must needs be ready to Celebrate the memory of such a Person, when we are called to do that Honour to him: and none that would be thought a *man*, much more a *Christian*, must ever refuse to remember his Saviour Christ, and give him Thanks, when in  
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the Sacrament he is call'd to it in Christ's own Name, and by his special invitation.

3ly, In eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Sacrament, we *confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God*. In this Feast, as has been shewn, we assure him that we will *Repent of every sin*, as ever we hope that he will *forgive us*; and will *endeavour with his Grace after every Virtue*, as ever we expect that he should *assist us*; and *obey every one of his Commandments*, as ever we look that he should *Crown us with Eternal Happiness*; and *believe that, for Christs sake, we shall have this Pardon, Grace, and Eternal Life upon these Terms, and not otherwise*. For all these Duties we give him our Word and Promise; and, on that Condition, for all these Blessings he gives us his Seal and Assurance back again.

And what man is there, who pretends to the Name of a *Christian*, who will refuse to do this when he has an Authentick Summons, nay, even a Friendly Invitation? will he not *Repent*, that he may be *forgiven*? nor *endeavour* after such Graces as he wants, that *Gods Spirit* may help him to them? nor *obey* all his Saviours Laws, that he may be *happy in heaven*? nor *believe*, that Christ has purchased these Benefits for us at Gods hands, upon these Terms;

Terms; but that without performing them we shall never have them? If he will not do all this, why doth he make any pretence to Religion? If he is unresolv'd, and suspends about any of these Particulars, why doth he profess himself a *Christian*? For these things are the very substance of *Christianity*, and the Life and Soul of all *Religion*. No man can belong to Christ without them, and when he was *Baptized* and came to him, he solemnly undertook and ingaged for them. And therefore if any man will refuse to make God his engagement of this *Faith*, *Repentance*, and *Obedience*, when he is call'd to *Promise* and *Profess* them; he revolts from his *Baptismal Vow*, and, if he persists in that mind, may as well renounce his Profession, and turn his back on the whole Christian Religion.

4ly, In eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Lords Supper, we *confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all our Brethren*, this being one end, as I have shewn, of this meeting, to *profess our selves in perfect Peace and Charity with all men*.

And who now, that owns himself a *Christian*, can seek shifts, and shun this when God calls him? when his Saviour, that dyed to make God Friends with him,  
asks



asks him to be Friends with all the World; can he refuse him? When he invites him to be at Peace with all his Members, and to embrace them all as Brethren; can he fly from him? If he shun this, he may as well shun every thing else, and quit all claim to his Religion. For *by this*, says our Saviour, *shall all men know that you are my Disciples, if you have Love one to another*, Joh. 13. 35. And *unless ye forgive men their Trespases*, says he again, *neither will your heavenly Father forgive you yours*, Matth. 6. 15. And *he that says he Loves God, and yet hates his Brother*, saith St. John, *is a Lyar*, 1 Joh. 4. 20. And *if it be possible*, saith St. Paul, *and as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men*, Rom. 12. 18. Love, and Peace, and mutual Friendship and Beneficence, are the great Duties which Christs Law prescribes, and which all his Followers must be forward at all times to make profession of. And therefore if any man turns away from declaring them, when God calls him to them; he turns his back of the most Signal Duty of his Religion, and will not come to that, whereby, above all things else, he should declare himself a Christian.

5ly, In Feasting with God at the Holy Sacrament, we are *vouchsafed the highest*

highest Honour; and receive Tokens of greatest Love, and injoyment of present Graces, and Pledges of future Glory from him; and these no man ought to refuse, when he is call'd to them.

He vouchsafes us the greatest Honour. For he calls us to his own Table, and tells us he is most glad to see us there, and that the oftner we come, the welcomer shall we be to his Supper; he invites us as his own Guests, and thereby seeks our Company and Acquaintance, and treats us as his Friends and Confidants: which Honour is so high, that greater cannot be shewed us.

He gives us the surest Tokens of highest Love. For he calls us to Feast upon the Body and Blood of his own Son, i. e. upon those Blessings which the breaking of his Body and shedding of his Blood procured for men; and shews us plainly, that he is still of the same mind, and is glad, that, for our sakes, he parted with him. For his inviting us to eat the Body, and drink the Blood of Christ in this Holy Supper, imports as much as if he should say to us. Lo! here my dear and only Son, whom I gave to shed his own hearts Blood a Ransome for your Souls. When I did it, your sins were most provoking, and render'd you utterly undeserving of it; and since you have

have received it, you have not been affected as you ought, but have shewed your selves most unthankful for it. But yet all this doth not make me Repent of what I have done, or grudge you the Benefit of him. I am come here freely to present you with him, and invite you, and exhort you, nay, intreat you to accept him. Eat his Body, and drink his Blood, i. e. those Benefits and that Expiation which was purchased by it; I freely give them without grudging, nay, I shall take it extremely ill if you refuse them. For I would by all means have you receive the advantage of him. I gave him once for you, and now again I give him to you; I am still of the same mind, to part with my own dear Son for your sakes, and to bestow him on you. I have nothing better wherewith to present you, but with him in this Holy Feast I do; and what higher Tokens can I give of the unbounded Love I bear you?

He gives us present enjoyment of many invaluable Graces. For the Lords Supper is a Treasury of Blessings, conveying to all those, who worthily partake of it, the Pardon of their Sins, and Spiritual Assistances, and Heavenly Improvements, and growth in all Virtues, and strength against all Temptations, as I shall shew under the next Head.

And lastly, He gives us the surest Pledges of future Glory. For when he offers us his

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his own Son, we may be sure he will not stick at any thing else, since he has nothing that is in any comparable Degree so precious and dear to him, as he is. This Gift is a *Faithful Earnest*, and certain Pledge of every thing else, which he can give us. For he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things? says St. Paul, Rom. 8. 32.

Thus in the *Bless'd Sacrament*, are we vouchsafed the greatest Honour, and receive Tokens of highest Love, and enjoymēt of present Graces, and Pledges of future Glories from Almighty God.

And what man now will refuse all these, when he is invited to them? Who can turn his back upon that Ordinance, wherein God calls him, that he may give Honour to him, and shew by the highest Tokens how he Loves him, and confer upon him present Graces, and give him Pledges of future Glories, and assure him what Regard he has of him, and how happy he intends to make him? *Common Ingenuity*, and *Good Manners*, nay, every mans own private Interest and Self advantage oblige him most readily to embrace, and not to sleight, or so much as slowly to accept of such offers. So that if any Person really believes, that all this Honour is shewn,

shewn, this Love expressed, these Graces given, or these Glories assured to him in the Communion: he must needs think himself highly obliged to come to it, and never cast about to seek shifts, and make excuses, or express a backward and unwilling mind, when he has an Invitation and an Opportunity so to do.

And thus we see, that not only our *Lords express Command* for it, but also the *obliging Nature* of those things which are meant by, and of those employments which are imply'd in it, are a strong and an indispensable Obligation on all grown Christians, who are capable of it, to frequent the *Holy Sacrament*. For therein they are call'd by their Saviour Christ, *publickly to profess his Religion*, and *their Communion with him*, and *thankfully to remember him*, and to *confirm the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Love and Friendship with their Brethren*, and to receive *Vouchsafements of highest Honour*, and *Tokens of greatest Love*, and *injoyment of present Graces*, and *Pledges of future Glories from him*: all which are things that no Christian man ought to stick at, or decline, but with all forwardness to close with, as often as he has an Opportunity, and fit occasion for them.

And thus it appears how much all the  
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Disciples of Christ, who are grown up to it, and understand it, (for no Duty obliges an incapable Subject) are bound to frequent this holy Sacrament. It is their Duty to come to the Communion, as it is to come to Church, to be Chast, Sober, Humble; Just; or to perform any other Precept of their Religion. For they have their Saviour Christ's express Command for it, who by injoining it, has required Obedience in such an Instance, as best shew their peculiar Reverence and Love to him; and to engage them the more to it, has freed them from all the load of Jewish Ceremonies, and imposed no heavier burden, than it and Baptism instead of them; and to make it take the more effect, left it among the last words which he spake to them; and to shew it was a matter of no small moment, would have it expressly specified in St. Paul's Commission; and tells them, That unless they come therein to eat his Flesh and drink his Blood, they have no Life in them; and will punish the neglect, or abuse of it, as he did the neglect of the Jewish Passover, which answer'd to it, with Excision. And the Nature of those things which are meant by it, and of those Employments which are to be exercised at it, most straightly oblige them to it. For therein they shew they have Fellowship with Christ, and appertain to his Religion,

ligion, and thankfully remember him, and Seal the New Covenant with God, and a League of Love and Friendship with their Brethren, and are vouchsafed the highest Honour, and receive Tokens of the greatest Love, and enjoyment of present Graces, and Pledges of future Glories from him: which are things that every Ingenuous man will, and every Good man ought to do, and no man, when he is call'd to it, can honestly decline, that professes himself a Christian.

Thus is it a necessary Duty in every man to come to the Sacrament, as it is to come to Church, or to other parts of Worship: And when once we are of Age for it, and have a fit opportunity and occasion offer'd, we are in strict Duty ingaged, and by a bond of many Cords, as we have seen, obliged so to do.

1<sup>st</sup>, I say we are bound to it, when once we are of Age for it. The Duty of this Holy Sacrament lies in such things, as suppose a competent Understanding, and due Knowledge of Religion in those who must discharge them. For therein we are to remember Christ, both what Commands he has left with us, and what he has done and suffered for us; and this we cannot do, till first we have learnt them. We must ingage to be at Peace, to do Ju-

stice,

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*stice*, and *shew kindness to all our Brethren*; and this supposes, that we know *first* what *Offices of Love*, and *Acts of Justice* are due to them. We must *consent to the Terms of the New Covenant*, and this implies, that *first* we should *understand* them. In *Baptism*, indeed, we enter'd into it before we had any knowledge of it; but that was because God, (who deals with us after the most favourable manner of Men, who allow grown Persons to bear the Parts, and federally to undertake for Infants, in things conducing to their Advantage,) admitted our *Sponsors*, that knew it very well, to stand as our *Representatives*, and in way of *Proxies* to Covenant and undertake for us. But the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper* is to be our *own Act*, and an express assenting in our own Persons to what they undertook; and this cannot be done till we are come to years, and are able of our selves to judge of it.

Till we are grown up then to the Age of Competent knowledge in Spiritual Affairs, we are not *capable* of discharging aright the Duty of this Sacrament. And till we are so, we are not obliged to it, since no Duty obliges an *incapable* Subject. For 'tis in *this* Duty, as 'tis in that of *making Peace*, or *giving good Advice*, or any others; they bind us not till we  
are



are grown up to them, and are come to know rightly how to discharge them. For in all these Cases, God exacts an account only of those *Talents* which he has entrusted with us, as we are told in the *Parable* of the men who had received the *Talents*, Matth. 25. and his Rule of proceeding is this, *unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more*, Luc. 12. 48.

2ly, When we are of *Age* for it, we are bound to it only when we have an opportunity, and a fit occasion is offered. It is in the *Communion at the Sacrament*, as it is in our *Communion in Prayers*, and other parts of *Worship*; we are bound to join in them when they can be had, and we are not lawfully hindered and diverted from them. But if either there is no place for them, or we are justly hindered from attending on them; we have no obliging opportunity for that time, but may without sin omit them. And thus it is when we are hindered by some call of *Providence*, when at that time we are call'd away to do some necessary Duty of *Justice*, or *Charity*, in another place. Or when we are detained at home by some *Disease*, or *bodily Indisposition*, under which it is not safe to go abroad, or venture out beyond our own Chambers; in

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in which case God, who prefers *Mercy* before *Sacrifice* when they thwart and interfere, *i. e.* *Essential Duties*, before *positive Precepts*, will excuse us. Or, lastly, when *our minds are disturbed by great Grief*, that cannot presently be cast off, or by *sudden Anger or Discontent* occasioned hard before, (which though ordinarily it be our own Fault, may yet sometimes be innocent,) at which time, since their Discomposure unfits them for so Divine a Service, they may omit it as being indisposed for it. This *St. Peter* intimates of *Prayers*, (and the Reason is the same of *this Ordinance*) when he exhorts the *Husband*, by a *discreet compliance*, and *patient bearing of his Wives Infirmities*, to prevent all *Peevishness* and *Domestick Quarrels*, that so they may have no need to omit or put by their *Devotions*; which, it seems, they would, if their minds were acted at that time by such undue Tempers. *Ye Husbands*, says he, *dwell with your Wives according to Knowledge*; giving Honour to the *Wives*, or treating them with Lenity and Care, as men do brittle Ware, because they are the *Weaker Vessels*, that your *Prayers be not hindred* by those Heats and Animosities, which very likely might arise otherwise, 1 *Pet.*

† Πατριάρχης  
Παντοφίον † Πι-  
σίδης προαγγέλλει  
τὴν δόξαν αὐτῆς π-  
νεύματι τῆς λαο-  
ποῖς ἐπισκόποις  
Περὶ τοῦ ὅτι ἐπι-  
δόξως ἱερατεύειν.  
Palladius Dialog.  
de vit. Chrysost.  
p. 128.

3. 7. And this was once the case of St. † Chrysostom, who, at the time of administering the Sacrament, being accidentally much discomposed in mind, by an unreasonable demand of Justice made by Eusebius against Antonine in the Synod then Assembled,

went out, and desired one of the Bishops then present to Officiate, declining the Communion at that Instant, because he had *some Trouble upon his Spirit*.

If then we either are *not come to years to understand it*, or have *no obliging opportunity for it*, or *some just hindrance that would excuse it*; this Duty of the Sacrament may *lawfully be omitted*. It is like in it, as it is in our *joyning in Prayers*, or *going to Church*; it admits of the *same Excuses*, and obliges in the *same Cases*. But where these rare Contingencies happen not, to exempt from it; it is a strict Duty that is bound upon us, as we have seen, by a Bond of many Cords, and a peremptory Commandment. So that when we have an opportunity for it, and no just hindrance to put us by it, to Communicate is a strict Precept, and in all Duty we are obliged so to do. But

But against this expretness of the Command, and strictness of the Duty to Communicate; some, perhaps, may urge the words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 11. *Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me, v. 25.* Which words, as often seem to limit the precept only to the Remembrance of Christ when we do Communicate, and to intimate, as if we had no Command to do this, and so with out sin might omit it when we please, but only to remember him when we do.

Now in Answer to this, I observe,

1<sup>st</sup>, These words, if we had no other proof of it, would not of themselves prove it a Command, and strict Duty to Communicate. But,

2<sup>ly</sup>, Neither do they infer the Contrary, and prove against it.

3<sup>ly</sup>, There are other Places enow, which sufficiently evince it.

1<sup>st</sup>, I say, these words, *Do this, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me,* if we had no other proof for it, would not amount to an obliging Command, and prove it a strict Duty to Communicate. For that which is plainly and indisputably expressed in them, is not that we should Communicate, but that we should Remember Christ when we do it, and they might have their full Sense, if nothing more than this were intended.

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But

But as of themselves they do not amount to such a Precept; so,

2ly, *Neither do they infer the contrary, and prove against it.* All that which they express, is only that we must remember Christ when we do Communicate; and this is done whether Communicating it self be a Duty, or whether it be not; and suiting thus equally with any side, as it doth not prove it a Duty to receive the Sacrament, so neither doth it prove there is no Duty in it. And of this we have still a further Argument, because if these words, *as often, &c.* infer there is no Duty to Communicate, the same may be inter'd of Prayer, since in *another Place* they are spoke of it, as *here* they are of the Sacrament. *When, i. e.* as often as ye Pray, says our Saviour, say, *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.* Luc. 11. 2. So that if they prove we are *not bound to Communicate*, but only to *remember Christ when we do it*; they will prove we are *not bound to pray*, but only *when we pray* directed to use *this Form* in prayer too.

Thus are these words, *Do this, as often as ye drink it, &c.* neither an Argument that to Communicate is a Duty, nor an Argument against it. They are indifferent, and equally incline both ways; so that when *that* is the *Question*, of themselves

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selves they are no proof on any side; but other things must decide it.

And then,

3ly, Although *this* place do not prove it an express Duty to Communicate, yet there are *other places enow that do sufficiently evince it*. For in *this* very Chapter, the words of our Lord at the *eating of the Bread* are absolute, and imply an *express Command* for it: *Do this*, says he, *i. e.* Take and eat Bread as now ye do, *in remembrance of me*; where not only the remembrance is enjoined, but also this particular way of doing it, *viz.* by eating Bread, wherein he is to be remembered,

1 Cor. II. 24. And so 'tis also in St. \* *Luke*, where \* *Luc. 22. 19*: the VVords are *Peremptory* for the *Apostle administering*, and so answerably for the *Peoples receiving* it, without any intimation of the *eating it self* being *indifferent* and *uncommanded*; which that *Evangelist* would not so unwarily have expressed, if Christ had so intended it. And our Lord shew'd us, not only that he has commanded this Sacramental eating, but that he has commanded it as a *necessary* thing, when he tells his Hearers, that *except they thus eat the Flesh, and drink the Blood of the Son of Man, they have no Life in them*, Joh. 6. 53. And this necessity of

it is further manifested, from the *necessity of the Passover* among the *Jews*, which answered to it; for at every Return of it, they were to be *cut off from Israel* whoever presumed to omit it. *Exod. 12. 15.* And if there were no exprels Command for it, yet are the *things* we are call'd to in it all of that *obliging Nature*, and such *necessary Duties*, that without Sin they cannot be declined. By all which, as we have seen, this Sacramental eating and drinking is evidently proved to be a *plain Duty*, and under a *peremptory Commandment*.

When therefore in this place the *Apostle* says of our drinking of the Cup, *Do this, as often as ye drink it*, he doth not intimate that we may do it as seldome as we please, or as if it were under no Law, or exprels Precept. He uses the words, *as often*, not because 'tis an *Arbitrary-Act* and there is no Duty in it; but because, though it be a Duty, we have not *always opportunity for it*, and so cannot *always* be performing it. For, as has been shewn, there is a Command to Communicate, and that, as all other *Affirmative Laws*, binds us to it at all times when a *fit occasion* is offer'd. When we eate and drink in the Sacrament, we must remember Christ; and when we have an opportunity to eat and  
drink

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drink there, we are obliged to it; as the *Jews*; we saw, were to the *Passover* which answered to it, who were to be cut off from *Israel*, when at any time they omitted it. So that to Communicate is no *Arbitrary Act*, but an *indispensable Duty*, and peremptory Command still.

And since it is thus necessary a Duty in every grown *Christian* to come to the Holy Sacrament; it must needs be a great and dangerous *Sin* in any of us, when we neglect and abstain from it. We must not think it an *indifferent thing*, but make Conscience of keeping off from the Holy Communion, as we do of keeping off from Prayers, of Swearing, doing Wrong, being Proud, Incontinent, or Drunken. For it is expressly and straitly forbidden by God, as well as they, and we incur his Anger, and, till we repent and do so no more, cannot regain his Favour, when we are guilty of any of them.

A neglect of the Lords Table therefore is a *Sin*, which, although God may excuse in those good Souls, who, because of their over-high Veneration for it, and Fear of their own Unworthiness to partake in it, in the honesty of their Hearts think they ought not to come to it: Yet will he not excuse in them when they are better inform'd; and much less in others, who neglect it be-

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cause



cause they are careless of it, or too *Wicked* and *Impenitent* to receive it.

He may excuse it, I say, in those Good Souls, who in the honesty of their Hearts, through Ignorance or Error, were held back, and because of their over-high Veneration for it, and fear of their Unworthiness to partake in it, thought they ought not to come to it. An innocent Ignorance, or mistake of an honest mind, may plead our excuse before God in this, as well as in other Duties. For in all of them, Christ has such a Sense of our Infirmities as that he can have Compassion on the Ignorant, and those that err, or are out of the way, Heb. 5. 2. So that if after an upright indeavour to be rightly inform'd in it, some Good Minds shall happen to mistake, their Error will not be imputed. It may be through the loose Discourse of some, or the general Practice of the World, who, by being so seldom at it, seem to set lightly by it; they think themselves not obliged to it. Or again, through the extream Rigidness of the Discourses of others, who require such extraordinary things to it as very few have attain'd, they think themselves always unworthy and unprepared for it, and that they should sin, and eat their own Damnation. But if they fall into these mistakes which make them abstain from

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from it, after an honest endeavour to be rightly inform'd about it; their Ignorance may plead their Excuse, and make their Neglect to be conniv'd at. God will not account it to them as a sin, because they knew it not, but were mistaken. For in this, as well as in all other Cases, *to him that knows to do Good, and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin*, Jam. 4. 17.

But though God may bear with this neglect of the Sacrament in Good men, whilst they are thus innocently misled: Yet will he not excuse it in them when they are better inform'd; and much less in others, who neglect it because they are careless of it, or too Impenitent to receive it.

*He will not excuse it even in them when they are better informed.* Their only plea for their not doing of this Duty, is, that after the best search they could make, they did not know they were bound to it, or that with safety they could perform it: and when once their Understanding is inlightened, this plea is removed, so that afterwards they can find no relief at all from it. They abstain then, when they know, if they are truly Penitent, they *might*, and *ought* to come; and that abstinence is *wilful*, and, unless they repent of it and amend it, will end in their Condemnation. For *to him that knoweth*

to do Good, and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin, Jam. 5. 17.

And much less *will* ke excuse it in others, who are careless of it, and too *Impenitent* to receive it. If they are hindred from the Lords Table out of *Slothfulness*, or are unworthy of it by Reason of their *Impenitence*; those are not their *Excuse*, but their own *Damning Fault*, and they must expect to bear the punishment of it. To tell God I did not come to the Sacrament because I would not Repent, is to tell him I would not come and promise to be Good, because I was resolved to continue Wicked: and that is a very odd way of excusing it. *Impenitence* is no excuse, but a most damning Sin; and therefore if we have no other cause to give why we did not come, we must needs be liable to Condemnation.

If any of you therefore who shall peruse *this Treatise*, have refused Gods invitation formerly, and have kept back from this Feast: by what I have here said you may see your Fault, and how nearly you are concerned, as you tender your dear *Saviours Honour*, or the *safety of your own most precious Souls*, to amend it. You have offended God in *not coming to the Communion*, as you would offend him in *not coming to Church*, in *not saying your Prayers*,  
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in not giving thanks for Mercies, in not being humble, honest, and upright in your dealings, or in omitting any other Duties. So that you must not think all is well with you when you keep away, as if you had done nothing. If the true Cause why you abstain'd was your well meant mistake about it, and your not knowing, after all the search you had opportunity to make, that every Good man, who Repents of all his Sins, is worthy and fit for it: God will wink at your Ignorance whilst it lasted; but that will be no excuse to you now you are better informed, so that now you will be Guilty of a Damning Offence, if you still neglect it after you are told of it. But if you have absented hitherto out of a careless Spirit, which would not attend the times, or be at the pains to come to it; or because you have an *Impenitent Heart*, which will not promise that Amendment and New Life, that is to be undertaken for and engaged in it: Then has your Absenting been your Damning Sin, which has provoked God against you, as all other Acts of Disobedience and Irreligion. If this is your Case, you must look upon your selves all this while to have been in a great Fault, which God will not forgive till you Repent and amend it. For God will for-

give you this Sin of neglecting the Sacrament, upon the same condition, whereon he will forgive all others, namely, when you *for sake* it, and *turn away* from it, and, instead of absenting, learn to frequent it. So that if you would keep a *Good Conscience towards God*, and *eye in Peace*, and have no *unrepented sins* to answer for at the last Judgment: Every one of you, that has sinfully flighted this Sacrament hitherto, must come to it henceforward, and, according to your Saviour Christs Commandment, readily partake in it, when you are called thereto.

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## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Benefits of Communicating.*

#### The Contents.

*The Sacrament is full of Blessings, which make it not only our Duty, but our Privilege. In the General, it is the most effectual means in all Religion to recommend our Prayers, and make them powerful; and so is the likeliest way to attain all Mercies. In particular, 1. It Seals to us the Pardon of our Sins for the Peace of our Consciences. 2. It encreases and Confirms in us all Graces. Those are ordinarily such as we bring along with us. It confers Grace, 1. By the Natural Virtue and Tendency of those Duties, which it both exercises, and excites in us. 2. By those inward Assistances, which it conveys to us. Since on all these accounts it is so excellent a means of Grace and New Life, 'tis the best Rule any Person can observe, who would go on in the Work of Repen-*  
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tance. All these Motives to Communicate, both from Duty and Interest, summ'd up.

**H**AVING shewn in the former Chapter how much it is every Christians Duty to frequent the Holy Sacrament, who is of Age to come to it, and how greatly they sin against God who neglect it, both from the obliiging Nature of the thing, and Christs express Commandment: I proceed now in this,

4<sup>th</sup>, To shew what great inducements we have to it, and how great the Benefits are that come by it, which should make us press to it of our selves were it not Commanded.

The Holy Sacrament has Blessings enow within it self to recommend it to our choice, if God had not interposed his Authority, and laid that weight upon it which he has. It is fully stored with Benefits, which make it, not only a *strict Duty*, but an *high Priviledge* to come to it, as the *Christian Church* has always thought, whose great *Penalty* lay in a *Separation*, or *Exclusion* from it. It is not only a matter of Honour to God, but also of highest Advantage to our selves; so that in all Reason we ought to seek it, and heartily thank God that we may be admitted to it, out of a care of our own Happiness and true Self-interest.

Of

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Of these *Benefits* I have mentioned some already, such as its being a *vouchsafement* of highest Honour to us, and a token of Gods greatest Love for us, and a certain pledge for our *Future Glories*, of all which I have Discoursed in the last Chapter. But besides them, it is full of many other singular Blessings and present Graces, which I shall now treat of in this. And those, which I shall take notice of, are these.

1<sup>st</sup>, In the General, *It is the most effectual means in all Religion to recommend our Prayers, and make them Powerful with God; so that 'tis the likeliest way to obtain all Mercies.*

2<sup>ly</sup>, In Particular.

1<sup>st</sup>, *It Seals to us the Pardon of our Sins for the Peace of our Consciences.*

2<sup>ly</sup>, *It encreases, and confirms in us all our Graces.*

1<sup>st</sup>, In the General, *It is the most effectual means in all Religion to recommend our Prayers, and make them Powerful with God; so that 'tis the likeliest way to obtain all Mercies.* And this it doth, by being a Commemoration unto him of the death of Christ, which is the only Argument that prevails with him to bestow them on us.

It is the common way of all men when they sue for kindnesses from others, and think they have not Interest enough  
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themselves, to use such Intercessions, and suggest such things, as have most Power with them, and are likeliest to incline them to grant their Desires. And as it is thus in our Requests to *men*, so is it in our Prayers to *God* too. We let those Considerations before his Eyes, and suggest those things to his Remembrance, which are fittest to move his Pity, and to make him favourable towards us. Thus the Holy men in the *Old Testament* in their Prayers are frequently putting God

† Psal. 119. 49. in mind of his † Cove-  
2 Chron. 6. 42. nant and Promise; and  
making mention of his

\* Psal. 132. 1. 10. Servant \* David, or  
† Deut. 9. 27. and † Abraham, or Isaac, or  
Exod. 32. 13. Israel, for whom they

knew he had an especial kindness: and with their Prayers they used to joyn Sacrifice, hoping to be the easier heard when they came with their Atonement in their Hands, and that the Life of the Beast being offer'd up in Commutation, and accepted instead of theirs, God would be the easier appeased, and more inclined to hear their Supplications. Upon which account, that their Prayers might have a Powerful Argument to recommend them going along with them, they were careful to offer them up at the *hour of Sacrifice*,

crifice, as appears from the  
Prayer of † Ezra, and of † Ezra 9. 5.  
\* David, at the Evening \* Psal. 141. 2.  
Sacrifice.

Now that which Powerfully *intercedes*  
with God for us, and which was shadow-  
ed out by all the *Jewish Sacrifices*, is our  
*Saviours Death*. For it was his *Blood* that  
merited so highly at Gods hands, as to  
make him think of shewing Favour, and  
being kind to us. *It is the Blood of Propi-*  
*tiation*, Rom. 3. 25. that makes peace be-  
tween God and Men, Col. 1. 23, and speaks  
better things than the *Blood of Abel*, calling  
for Life and Salvation, as that did for  
Destruction, Heb. 12. 24. And 'tis the  
*Representation of that Blood* now in *heaven-*  
*ly places*, that gives *Christ himself* such ab-  
solute power with God, and makes him  
sure to prevail whensoever he *intercedes*  
for us. For by it he entered into the *Holy*  
*Place*, where the *Mercy seat* or *Propitiato-*  
*ry* was, Heb. 9. 3, 5. 12. 24. and where  
he ever lives to make *intercession* for us.  
Heb. 7. 25. So that the great Argument,  
which either *Christ our high Priest* now in  
*Heaven* offers for us, or which in our  
Prayers we can plead for our selves, is  
his own *Death* and *Sufferings*.

Now this is set before God in every  
Prayer, and in all Acts of Religion, in all  
which

which we use *Christs Name*, and desire to be heard, and hope to prevail through *his Mediation*. But in the *Sacrament* it is done *more perfectly*, and with greater *Solemnity*, and that too by *Gods own appointment*. For one chief end of the Holy Sacrament, is to *Commemorate the Death of Christ*; i. e. to set it out in solemn shew, and make mention of it, not only before men, but also to *Almighty God*. This do in Remembrance or

\* *ἡμῶν* \* Commemoration of me, says our Saviour,

Luc. 22. 19. And as oft as ye do it, says St. Paul, ye shew forth the *Lords Death*, i. e. both to God and Man till he come. 1 Cor. 11. 26.

Thus do we now where so livelily and advantageously set out this great Argument of being heard, as in the Holy Sacrament: which we may justly hope will be the more observed, and have the more effect, because it is not done of our own heads, but by Gods own special Direction and Appointment. And where the Argument is most advantageously set out, we may expect the better effect, and greater force from it. And this the *Ancient Christians* thought, accounting their Prayers were not like to be so Powerful at any time, as when this Commemoration

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on of Christs Death, the only Plea for being heard, accompanied them. And therefore at the Sacrament they \* used to pray, not only for *themselves*, but also for *all others*, and to recommend any Person or thing to God which was dear to them, thinking they could never so advantageously, as at that time sue for them.

• Thus 'tis in the form prescribed Constit. Apostol. l. 8. c. 13. & 15. p. 484, 485. tom. prim. Concil. ed. Lab. And this Eusebius testifies de vita Constant. l. 4. c. 45.

Thus in the General, is the Holy Sacrament a most *likely means to obtain for us all Mercies*, because it is the most *effectual course in all Religion to recommend our Prayers*, which must procure them for us.

2ly, In Particular.

1st, It *seals to us the Pardon of our Sins for the peace of our Consciences*.

2ly, It *increases and confirms in us all our Graces*.

1st, It *seals and confirms to us the Pardon of our Sins for the peace of our Consciences*.

In the Holy Sacrament God calls us to give us a *full Pardon*, by giving us that Blood which was \* shed \* Mat. 26. 28: for the remission of Sins, and which is the Blood of Expiation: and having

having received that at his hand, if we are true Penitents, we need not doubt but that our sins are expiated, and he is reconciled. The Sacrament it self, as we have seen, is nothing less than a *solemn Confirmation of the New Covenant*, which promises Remission of Sin to all that truly repent of it. So that when with Penitent Hearts we come to joyn in it, we come to stipulate and secure a Pardon of all our Offences, which will give us all the security of it that Covenants and Promises can make us. Whensoever we Repent, indeed, we have Gods promise of Forgiveness, which may comfort our hearts after any sin, not only in the *Communion*, but in *every Penitential Prayer and Confession*. But in the Sacrament this Promise is again repeated, and in most solemn manner Sealed and Confirmed; to shew us that God is still of the same mind, and to give us a *renewed* and a *sensible* assurance of it. And when God has thus set his Seal to it, and a Penitent Soul has just received his Word and Bond for it; it need not question but he is reconciled, and, unless it starts back from these penitential engagements, and falls afresh into new Provocations, will always continue so to be.

And thus the Sacrament is the most effectual

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fectual means, to calm the Fears, and quiet the Consciences of all the true penitents. If once they make sure of their own Repentance after any Fault, it doth that in an *ordinary* way, which an *Angel from Heaven*, and a *special Revelation* would do in *extraordinary*, i. e. it lets them know their Sins are Pardoned, and that God is their Friend. For therein they receive from him the *Blood of Expiation*, a plain proof their Sins are atoned for and forgiven. And therein there is an express agreement, and *solemn Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation* between God and them, which is confirmed by this Feast of his own prescribing: and having this Instrument of his own appointment, which they may look upon as his Hand and Seal to it, they may chearfully depend upon it, and rest satisfied in their own mind.

2ly, It *increases and confirms in us all our Graces.*

These Graces are *ordinarily* such as we bring along with us, which we either have already practised, or are fully purposed and resolved so to do. For therein God gives Grace only to the *Worthy Communicants*; and those Communicants only are *Worthy*, who Repent of all their Sins, and are wholly determined to lead a New Life in Obedience to all his Commandments. It is  
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not a Sacrament intended to give strength in Grace, to those that have nothing of it; for it is our *Spiritual Meat and Bread*, as our Saviour calls it, *John. 6. 51, 55.* the use whereof is not to give *Life to a Dead Person*, but *Strength and Nourishment to a Living*. It is not designed to turn an Impenitent Man into a true Penitent, or to make an Ill man Good; for every impenitently ill man is an *Unworthy Receiver*, and eats his *own Damnation*, which is a *Curse* and not a *Blessing*; so that he is not the better, but the worse by it. But it is intended to make a *Good Man Better*, to carry on Repentance in those that have begun it, and to confirm and enlarge every Virtue in those who are already possessed of it. If we come to it with *Faith*, or *Belief of the Scriptures*, particularly of Gods promises to *pardon our Sins* for Christs sake upon our *Repentance*, and to *help us to any Graces* upon our *indeavours*, and to make us *Eternally happy* upon our *entire Obedience*; it *strengthens* and *assures* it: if with *Love of our dear Lord*, who dyed for us; it *increases* it: if with *Thankfulness* for his kindneses, particularly that of giving his own Life for ours; it makes us *more sensible* of it: if with *heartly Repentance*, and full purpose of *amending all our Sins*; it makes us more

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*unmoveable and settled* in it: it with *Peace*, and *Charity towards all our Neighbours*; it fills us with a *greater abundance* of it. It augments all the *Virtues* of a Good man which he brings to it, making him more perfect in them, and strong in Spirit to persevere and go through with them. But these Effects it has not upon an ill man, nor produces this increase of Virtue in those, who bring nothing of it along with them. So that 'tis no disparagement to the Virtue of this Sacrament, if wicked Men find themselves wicked still, and not at all amended by their Receipt of it, since it was not ordained for their Improvement. It was not meant to give *Grace* to those that are *Graceless*, or to give *Repentance* to *Impenitent* Persons: but to carry them through in their Repentance who have fully set upon it, and to enable them to lead a New Life who are resolved to do it, and to strengthen them to amend a Fault who are wholly bent to strive against it, and to confer Grace on those that have it, and make them more Gracious still.

And this the Holy Sacrament is to every worthy Communicant. It conveys Grace into his Soul, and makes him stand more firm, and increase in every Virtue of a Christian. It is an excellent means

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to make him a better man, and to carry him on to improve in Duty and Holy living: So that every one who comes worthily, will gain a great increase of Grace and Strength, and be much set on in spiritual growth by Receiving.

Now this it doth two ways.

1<sup>st</sup>, By the *Natural Virtue and Tendency of those Duties, which it exercises and excites in us.*

2<sup>ly</sup>, By those *inward Assurances, which it conveys to us.*

1<sup>st</sup>, A worthy Receiving conveys Grace into our Souls, and confirms and increases us in all Virtues, by the *Natural Efficacy and Tendency of those Duties, which it exercises, and excites in us.* For it excites, and therein we exercise several Duties, which help on a good Life, and set it forward; and therein we bind our selves by solemn Vows and Engagements to go on in it: both which are most powerful to effect and improve it.

1<sup>st</sup>, It excites, and therein we exercise several Duties, that help on a good Life, and set it forward. All the Duties of worthy Receiving are instances of an Holy Life, as we have seen, and parts of a Good man: but several of them are not only particular Duties in themselves, but with all most powerful helps to the performance of

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of all others: So that in performing and improving them, we do not only discharge and grow in *some* Virtues; but make away for our easie Discharge and fuller growth in *all* others also. And there are a *fixt Remembrance* and *firm Faith* of *Christs wonderful kindness* to us, especially in *Dying* for us; an *intense Love*, and *heartly Thankfulness*, and *intire Resignation* of our selves to his Service, and *true Repentance* and *Abhorrence* of all our Sins; all which, as they are much *improved in a worthy Communion*, so are they most *Powerful in helping us to become Obedient and Good men*.

1<sup>st</sup>. I say these Duties are *improved in us by the Holy Communion*. And this they are by being both *exercised*, and *excited* in us at that time.

They are *all exercised* in every Worthy Communicant at that time, because in *them*, as we have seen, consists the *worthiness of Receiving*. And the more still they are exercised, the more they are improved. For all *Habits* come by usage, and Custom makes those things, which at first seemed strange, to become, not only *Easie*, but *Natural* to us. So that in exercising them at the Sacrament, we shall improve and add to them, and go away with a greater measure of them,  
than

than we brought when we came.

And this we shall more especially do, because therein they are not only *exercised*, but mightily *excited* in us also. The Holy Sacrament suggests such *Powerful Motives* to them, and prevents us with such *obliging Reasons* for them, as we cannot have any where else; so that we cannot take a better way, than by coming to it, to improve them. For therein we most *solemnly* and *attently* remember, how, *when our sins had made us utter Enemies of God, and Heirs of Destruction, Christ laid down his own Life in our stead, and by that Ransome redeemed us from it.* And this is not only the *highest*, but, in a manner, the *sum total* of all those inducements, which can ingage us to these Virtues, or possess us with them. For what can possibly raise so *warm a love in Christ* in an *ingenuous Spirit*, that is sensible of what is done to it, as to see how infinitely he has Loved us, and, when we were his bitter Enemies, gave his own Life in exchange for ours? What can ever ingage us to so great *Thankfulness*, as to think that a Person so far above us, and that stood in no need of us, and that was not sought to by us, and that was even then most highly disobliged and had received the greatest Provocations from us, should most

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most frankly give his own self to do us a kindness? What can so powerfully move us to *resign up our selves* to any one, as to see that he has bestowed himself on us, first to buy us off from our implacable Enemies, and that for no Self-Interests or By-Ends of his own, but purely for our Eternal Happiness? What can work in us so *heartly a Repentance*, and provoke us into so *utter an Indignation and Abhorrence* of all our Sins, as to behold in our dear Lords Agonies what they deserv'd, and how unmeasurably mischievous they proved, and what inexpressible Tortures they brought on him, when he would put himself in our place, and undertake to answer for us? These things are most livelily set out, and powerfully suggested to us in this Blessed Sacrament, one chief business whereof is solemnly to Commemorate and make mention of them: And they are the most effectual means to raise in us a constant mindfulness, a zealous and intense Love of him that dyed for us, and an hearty thankfulness for all his kindnesses, and a sincere Repentance and utter abhorrence of all our Sins, and an intire Resignation of our selves to his Use and Service, that can be given us. And the Sacrament being thus richly furnished with the most

persuasive Motives, and thus vividly suggesting to us the most Powerful Reasons for all these Virtues; it must needs be the best Course to improve in them, and we cannot lay out our time upon them better, or to more effect, in any other way.

Thus are the Duties of a fixt Remembrance, and firm Faith of Christ's dying for us, of an intense Love, and hearty Thankfulness, and Resignation of our selves to his Service, and true Repentance and Abhorrence of all our Sins; very much set on, and improved in all worthy Receivers by the Holy Communion. They will be heightened and increased by receiving, because they are both *exercised*, and, by an *Objective Representation* of most forcible inducements to them, powerfully *excited* in them at that time.

And as these Duties are all improved by the Holy Communion; so are they,

2ly, *Most Powerful in helping us to become Obedient and Good men.* If we were but perfect in these Virtues, and they had once got the Ascendant over us, and ruled in our Hearts; they would have an Universal influence on all others, and govern our whole Lives. For if, when we are tempted to any sin, our *minds*, being familiarized

miliarized to it, would at that instant readily *suggest* to us that *Christ dyed* for it, and that it put him to all the pain and anguish he suffered; we should not *endure to come near it*. If we have any *true Love*, and *Zeal* for him, we shall shew no manner of *Favour* or *Compliance* with it. If we are really *Thankful* for what he has done, for *his sake* we shall *withstand* it. If we are *resign'd* up to his use, we shall have *nothing to do with it*, because he is *against* it. And if we *abhor* it for the pains it put him to when he answer'd for it, and will at last put us to also if we continue in it, we shall *disdainfully reject* and *turn away* from it. If we *Believe* and remember always, as we have need, that *Christ died* for our Sins, and procured us Pardon for them upon our Repentance, and Grace to get quit of them upon our best Endeavours; that *Faith* will make us *Obedient*, and carry us on to amend them. If we truly *Love* Christ, that Love will make us *do something for him*, and cast to please and † o- † Joh. 14. 15. bey him. If we are *Thankful* for what is done, we shall never despise him by any Sin, which for all his *Benefits* were to return the greatest *injuries* again. If we are *resign'd* up to his use, we shall *Faithfully serve* him. If we

are *heartily Penitent*, and *abhor* our Sins, we shall forsake them. If we have this lively Faith and Remembrance of Christs dying for us, and this intense Love, and hearty Thankfulness, and entire Resignation of our selves to his Service, and sincere Repentance, and utter Abhorrence of all our Sins: If we have *these Virtues*, I say, and in *these prevailing measures*, they will carry us on to an Holy Life, and make us Obedient to all God's Commandments. And therefore since this Holy Sacrament, when 'tis worthily received, doth so much improve these Virtues in us; it must needs help us on, and improve us in all others, and in the whole course of a good Life too.

Thus doth a worthy receiving by its own *Natural tendency* confirm and encrease us in all good Living, by our *exercising*, and its *exciting* in us such Duties, as help it on and set it forward: And so doth it,   
 2ly, By our *binding ourselves thereat in solemn Vows and Ingements to go out in it*.

One *chief end* of our meeting at this Feast, and *prime part* of our Worthiness in partaking of it, is to *confirm the New Covenant*, as we have seen, and to make God our Faithful promises, that from that day we will amend all our Faults, that so we may attain that Pardon and  
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Happiness, which, upon our true Repentance, he comes to offer and assure to us. And these *solemn Vows* and *Promises* are a fast hank upon us to make us leave our Sins, and do all that he requires of us. For every Man *ought*, and thinks himself *concerned* to be as good as his word, and to perform what he has promised; especially when 'tis to one, who is too *Wise* to be *deluded*, and too *Just* and *Powerful* to suffer any abuses of him to pass *unrevenged*, which all Men, that understand any thing, believe of *Almighty God*. When we Promise and Vow to him, we know that he *cannot be deceived*, and that he *will not be mocked*; so that we must needs see it stands us instead, and is our highest concern to perform with him. And therefore, since in the Sacrament we do in the most solemn manner Vow to amend our ways, and promise an Holy Life to Almighty God; in regard none that are *honest will*, and none that are *wise* and *serious* dare be unmindful of such sacred and solemn Compacts, it must needs be an excellent way to bind it fast upon our Souls, and fix it in our minds, and so help very much to establish and imprint it in us.

And thus we see how a worthy receiving conveys Grace, and confirme and



increases in us all Virtues by the *Natural tendency* of those Duties, which it *exercises*, and *excites* in us. For it *powerfully excites*, and therein we *exercise several Duties*, which *help on a Good Life*, and *set it forward*, and *bind our selves by solemn Vows and Engagements to go on in it*, both which are most Powerful to improve and effect it.

And as it thus confirms and increases in us all Graces, by the *Natural Virtue and Tendency* of those Duties, which it *excites* in us: So does it,

2ly, By those *inward Assistances*, which it *ministers and conveys to us*.

This Sacrament doth not only confer Grace by its *Natural Tendency*, as other means; but moreover, by virtue of *Gods Promise* and *especial Bounty* to the *Worthy Receivers* of it, as it is an Instrument in his hands. He tells us that he will do great things at the presence of it, and be liberal to *Spiritual Blessings* to all that duly partake in it: So that besides what they do from the Virtues themselves, which are exercised thereat, they may promise themselves much *Spiritual Grace* and *Strength* from his *Free Gift*, and immediate concurrence with it. For in the Sacrament he offers them all that *outward Grace*, and *Spiritual strength*, which

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which Christs Death procured ; and therefore, if they come to it worthily, so as their own unworthiness is no bar against it, that offer will be sure to take effect, and they shall undoubtedly receive it. And this is plainly intimated to us, when our *Saviour* tells us of *his Flesh* that it is *Bread*, the true Use and End whereof is for \* *support* \* Psal. 104. 15. and *nourishment*, Joh.

6. 51. And when St. *Paul* declares, that the *Cup of Blessing* which we Bless, is the *Communion*, or † *Com-* † *Kommunion*.  
municating to us the

*Blood of Christ*, i. e. those Benefits his Blood procured us : And, that the *Bread* which we break, is the *Communion*, or Communicating to us the *Body of Christ*, i. e. those Graces which the offering of his Body obtain'd for us, amongst † which are † Gal. 3. 13. 14. these *Spiritual Assistances*,

1 Cor. 10. 16. And when our Lord himself tells us, that the *Bread* he gives us, is *his Body*, and that the *Cup* he reaches out to us, is *his Blood*, Mat. 26. 26, 28. By which, though he mean not that they are his Body and Blood in their *Natures*, yet the least he can mean is, that they are so in their *Effects*, so that when we receive them, we receive all the Blessings of his

*Blood-shedding*,, and all that Grace which his Death has purchased for all Men.

And thus the Church of Christ has

† Ideo in similitudinem quidem accipis Sacramentum, sed veræ Naturæ gratiam, virtutemque consequeris. *Ambros. de Sacram. l. 6. c. 1.*

\* Sed immortalitatis alimonia datur, a communibus cibis differens, Corporalis substantiæ retinens speciem, sed virtutis Divinæ invisibili efficientia probans adesse præsentiam. *Cyp. de Cæna Dom. sub. init.*

† --- Εὐχαριστία ἐν λητα. ἥ ἐστὶ κατὰ πίσιν μεταλαμβάνοντες, ἀμαρτίζονται καὶ σώματα καὶ ψυχὰς. *Clem. Alex. Pedag. l. 2. c. 2. p. 151. Ed. Par.*

\* Ἀρτὸς ἐσθ' ὁ μὲν, σῶμα γινώ-

still thought concerning it. † In the Sacrament, says St. Ambrose, thou receivest the similitude of the Body of Christ, i. e. the Bread and Wine which represent it; but, together with that, all the Grace and Virtue which the true and real Body obtained. \* This Sacramental Food, says St. Cyprian, or whosoever was the Author of that Tract, is in outward appearance a bodily Substance,; but by invisible Efficiency, it works all the Effects of a Divine Power and Presence. † They that partake of the Eucharist by Faith, says St. Clement, of Alexandria, are sanctified thereby both in Body and Soul. And, \* We eat the Bread, says Origen, which by Prayer is made the Body of Christ, Holy

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*Holy in it self, and making those Holy who feed on it with Resolutions of New Life and Holy Purpose.*

πάντες διὰ τὴν ἐν-  
χρὴν ἀγίαν π, καὶ  
ἀγαθὸν τοῦ μετ'  
ὧνδε παροτρύνουσιν  
αὐτοὺς χρησμένους.  
Orig. cont. Cels. l.  
8. p. Ed. Cant. 399.

And this is another way, whereby the worthy Receiving of the Sacrament Confirms and Augments in us all Spiritual Graces; viz. *As it is an Instrument in Gods Hands, who, at the presence of it, ministers and conveys them to us.*

And by this it appears that the Holy Sacrament confirms and increases us in all Graces, both by the *Natural Virtue* and *Tendency* of those Duties, which it *excites* and *improves* in us; and also by those *inward Assurances* and *Spiritual Aids*, which it *ministers* and *conveys* to us.

And thus we see how the Holy Sacrament is full of Grace and a quickning Spirit, and helps mightily to set us on in an Holy Life, and in the work of Reformation and Amendment. And therefore when any Persons turn *Penitents*, and resolve to lead new Lives; *one of the best Rules* that can be given them is, to frequent it. For it will carry them forward in their work, and, what by the *Natural Tendency* of the Duties themselves that are exercised in it, what by the *Assurances*

that are conveyed by it, increase their Strength, and give them Power to go through with it. It will perfect them in Obedience by *exercising*, and *exciting*, and by both *improving* in them that *Faith*, *Love*, *Thankfulness*, *Resignation*, and *Repentance*, which are the most Genuine, *Principle* and *Effectual* cause of it. It will bind it upon their Souls and ingage them to it, by their *repeating* every time they are at it, their *solemn Vows* and *sacred Promises* to go on it. And in it will inable them to succeed in it, by bringing down from God those *inward Helps* and *Spiritual Assistances*, which shall bear them through it. So that if any man begins to look towards God, and longs to go forward with the work of Reformation and Amendment: He ought in all Reason to seek out, and press in to be admitted to the Holy Sacrament. For it is one of the best Rules that can be prescribed in his Case, and serves his end above any thing: and therefore *he* must not in any wise shun it, but lay out for it above all men living. A man that will not Repent, indeed, whilst he continues in that mind, must not come to it; for he would not receive Good, but hurt by it. But if he resolves to amend his ways, and seeks out for help, and would make use of any  
means

means which would do him most Service in effecting it : let him be constant at the Lords Table, and frequently Communicate. It will quicken him when once he is in the way to become good, and amend his pace where he has need to be set forward, and strengthen him in those Parts where he is weak and most liable to be assaulted, as St. Ignatius told the Ephesians, when he advised them to be frequent in it ; saying,

† Shew haste to assemble often in the Eucharist ; for the oftner you meet in it, the more your standing is secured, and the Power of Satan is destroyed. It will fortifie him in all Trials wherein he is like to be most endanger'd ; enlivening in him that

*Holy Zeal, and steady Purpose, and other Graces, which must bear him through it ; for which cause it was used anciently, and upon a like occasion would be so still, as a Preparation for the greatest Tryals, and to fit men to Dye Martyrs for the Cause of Christ.*

† Those, says St. Cyprian and the other African Bishops, whom we

† Σπεύδετε  
πυκνότερον συνέρ-  
χεσθαι εἰς εὐχα-  
ριστίαν θεῷ καὶ εἰς  
δοξάν τοῦ αὐτοῦ  
πυκνὸς ὅτι τὸ αὐ-  
τὸ γίνεσθαι, κα-  
ταργεῖται αἰ διολύ-  
μεις τὸ Σάταν.  
*Ignat. Ep. ad E-  
phes. Ed. Voss. p. 25.*

† Quos excita-  
mus & hortamur  
ad prælium, non

*would*

inermes & nudos relinquamus, sed protectione sanguinis, & Corporis Christi muniamus: Et cum ad hoc fiat Eucharistia, ut possit accipientibus esse tutela, quos tantos esse contra adversarium volumus, munimento Dominicae Saturitatis armemus. *Cyp. & alii Episc. in Epist. Synod. Eccles. Afric. ad Eccles. Roman. Ep. 57. Ed. Oxon. 54. Pamel.*

would preserve safe and invulnerable against the fiercest Darts of the Adversaries, we arm first with the Lords Supper, wherewith they may be guarded as with a shield, and wherein they may be secured as in an impregnable fortress. It is an excellent means of confirming every Grace, and affording Spiritual Help and Strength to all that want it: and that is inducement enough, were there no Command for it, for every man,

who desires to be intirely good and strong in Spirit, to resort to it.

And thus at last it appears what those Blessings are which come by the Sacrament, and which are sufficient to ingage all good Souls to press to it of themselves though it had no where been commanded. For it is a most effectual means to prevail with God in all their Prayers and thereby to obtain all Mercies, it Seals to them the pardon of their sins for the Peace of their Consciences, and Confirms and Augments in them all their Graces. So that  
if

if they have, I will not say any *Duty* and *Service* for their *Saviour*, but any *Love* of themselves and care of their own *Souls*, they will seek to be admitted, and come hastily when they are called thereto.

To conclude this point then, the sum of what I have said to ingage mens presence at this *Feast*, and to *Communicate* as often as an opportunity is offered, amounts to this: It is their *Duty* to come to the *Communion*, as much as it is to come to *Church*; to be *Temperate*, *Humble*, *Just*, or to perform any other *Precepts* of their *Religion*. For they have *Christs* express *Command* for it; who, by injoyning it, has required *Obedience* in such an Instance, as best shews their peculiar *Reverence* and *Love* to him; and to ingage them to it, has freed them from all the load of *Jewish Ceremonies*, and imposed no heavier *Burden*, than *It*, and *Baptism*, instead of them; and to make it take the more effect, left it among the last *Words* which he spake to them; and to shew it is a matter of no small moment, would have it expressly specified in *St. Paul's Commission*; and tells them, that unless they come therein to eat his *Flesh* and drink his *Blood*, they have no life in them; and will punish the neglect, or abuse of it, as he did of the *Jewish Passover*, which answered



to it, with *Excision*. And the *Nature* of those things which are meant by it, and wherein they are to imploy their minds when they are present at it, most *straitly oblige* them to it. For therein they shew they have *Fellowship with Christ*, and appertain to his *Religion*, and *thankfully remember him*, and *Seal the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Love and Friendship with their Brethren*, and are *vouchsafed the highest Honour*, and receive *Tokens of the greatest Love*, and *injoyment of present Graces*, and *Pledges of Future Glories* from him; which are things that every *Ingenuous man will*, and every *Good man ought* to do when he is call'd to them, and no man can honestly refuse or decline, who professes himself a *Christian*. These things *oblige* all those who are of *Age* for it, and have an *opportunity* and *fit occasion offer'd*, and have no *Lawful Lett* or *Impediment*, of *Providential hindrances*, *sickness*, or other thing, which would excuse their coming to *Prayers*, or other *Ordinances of Christ*; they oblige all such, I say, to come to this *Feast* when they are call'd to it. And, if after they are shewn how much it is their *Duty* to joyn in it, and how *Repentance* make them

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them worthy of it, through *Carelesness*, or *Impenitence* they stay away from it; they sin against God, and are Guilty of a *Damning Fault*, which will not be forgiven them till they *Repent* of it and amend it. But if there were no *Guilt* in the *Neglect*, and to *Communicate* had not been thus required; yet would the *Blessings* of the thing it self have ingaged every *Penitent Good Man* to press in to be admitted. For it is the most effectual course in all Religion to prevail with God, and to be heard in all their Prayers; it Seals to them the *Pardon* of their *Sins*, for the peace of their *Consciences*; and *Confirms* and *Augments* in them all their *Graces*; bringing down such help as may make them stand in all Tryals, and carrying them on, beyond any means that can be prescribed, in the course of Repentance and new Obedience: which, to all that love the ease of their own Minds, and have any care of their own Souls, are invitation more than enough to engage their presence at this Ordinance; and as for those that do not, they are neither to be won by them, nor by any others.

And thus having shewn what is the meaning of eating Bread and drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament, and wherein lies the Worthiness of doing it, and how much it

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*is every Good Christians Duty to frequent it, and what great Benefits there are that come by it, which should make us press to it of our selves were it not Commanded: I shall proceed now,*

*sly, In the last Place, to consider those Excuses, and to take of those Pleas, which are most usually made against it; of which in the next Part.*

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Part III.

# PART III.

*Of the Hindrances that keep men from  
the Communion.*

## CHAP. I.

*Two Hindrances from Commu-  
nicating.*

### The Contents.

*One most General Hindrance, that keeps men  
from the Sacrament, is a Fear of their  
being Unworthy and Unfit to receive it.  
This Answer'd by shewing, 1. The Par-  
tiality of it, because they are not so scru-  
pulous about Neglecting, as about Un-  
worthy Receiving, though there be the same  
cause for it. 2. That every true Peni-  
tent is worthy of it : Yea, he that has only  
fully purposed Amendment, though he has  
not had time to perform it. 3. Impeni-  
tence,*

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tence, which unfits them for it, is no Excuse for the Neglect of it. 4. Impenitent men, who alone are unfit, if they understand the danger of their State, cannot continue in it but amend it, and then they may worthily Communicate. 2. A Second Hindrance is, because an Unworthy Receiver eats his own Damnation, 1 Cor. 11. 29. which makes not Receiving seem the safer side. By Damnation is meant, 1. A Damning Sin, which is deadly till we Repent of it; and such are both unworthy eating and sinful abstaining, so that they are equal as to that point. 2. Temporal Penalties, which were inflicted for their Intemperance at this Feast, and other Disorders peculiar to those times, and are not now usual in ours, so that the fear of them need not discourage us from it.

Since a worthy Receiving of the Holy Sacrament is a Duty which our Blessed Lord has so straitly injoynd, and from which we may all hope to reap so great Benefit, as has been shewed; it may well be expected, that all who would do Service either to their Saviour, or to themselves, should readily joyn in it whensoever an Opportunity is offer'd. And so, 'tis like, all that pretend to serious Religion would, were it not that they have

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have some Exceptions in their own minds against it, which, till they are removed, make all Discourses of the *Duty* or *Usefulness* of it fall without effect, and persuade them, that, however *necessary* or *adviseable* it may be to *others*, yet it is not so to *them*, who have so *just* an hindrance to excuse or discourage them from being present at it.

To give this *Duty* as fast hold as I can therefore on the *Consciences* of all those, who shall peruse this *Treatise*; having already set forth the *indispensable obligations* we have to it, I shall now proceed to remove those *Hindrances*, and to take off those *Pleas*, which are offer'd to excuse, and keep men back from complying with it. And as for *them*, the most weighty and considerable, which I have been able to learn, or have had opportunity to meet with, are such as follow.

Men are most ordinarily hindred from the Sacrament, notwithstanding it is so much both their *Duty* and their *Interest* to frequent it, by *one*, or other of these things.

1<sup>st</sup>, Because they think themselves unworthy of it, and unfit to receive it.

2<sup>ly</sup>, Because of the great danger of Unworthy Communicating, Damnation being said to be eaten in it, which seems to make abstaining the safer side.

3<sup>ly</sup>, Be-

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3ly, Because therein they are to promise concerning every Sin they find themselves guilty of, that they will no more commit it; and this Promise they dare not make, because they fear they shall not keep it.

4ly, Because of the great difficulty they apprehend to be in worthy receiving, and their want of time and leisure to prepare for it.

5ly, Because they see others, or have found themselves, to be no whit bettered or improved by it; so that 'tis not worth their while to fit themselves for it.

6ly, Because they have not that Charity for all the World, which is to be professed in it.

7ly, Because, though they be with others, yet others are not in Charity with them; and therefore they fear they want that Peace which is required to it.

8ly, Because it is a Presumption in us to approach it, and therefore an humble man should abstain from it.

9ly, Because many Good People are seldom or never seen at it, and therefore they may be Good too, and have good Company, if they keep away from it.

10ly, Because others that are unworthy of it, are admitted to joyn in it.

11ly, and lastly, Because though they ought, and would come to the Sacrament, yet they would not Kneel, which is the

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Posture appointed by the Church, wherein they are to receive it it.

These are such things as do most ordinarily hinder Good People from partaking in this Ordinance; but indeed they ought in no case to be their hindrance from doing their Saviour, and their own Souls this Service, as will more fully appear from treating of all the *Particulars*.

1<sup>st</sup>, *One Thing*, that is the most general hindrance of all, and keeps back very many from the Sacrament, who otherwise are desirous enough to partake in it; is their *thinking themselves unworthy of it, and unfit to receive it*.

Now to silence this Plea, and to satisfy the minds of those that make it, so as there may be no more cause for it; I shall observe,

1<sup>st</sup>, *Their great Partiality in it*; because they are not so scrupulous about neglecting, as about unworthy receiving it, though there be the same cause to scruple it.

2<sup>ly</sup>, *That every Penitent who is resolv'd to leave his Sins, and has begun the change, is really worthy*; so that the thoughts of unworthiness ought not to put him by it.

3<sup>ly</sup>, *That Impenitence, the only thing which unfits them for it, is no excuse at all for their neglect of it*.

4<sup>ly</sup>, *That Impenitent men, who are unworth*



worthy of it, if they understand the danger and misery of their State, can by no means continue in it, but must forthwith Repent and amend, and then this hindrance is gone, and they may worthily approach to it.

1<sup>st</sup>, I say, They shew great Partiality in this Plea, because they are not so Scrupulous about Neglecting, as about the unworthy Receiving it, though there be the same cause to scruple it. They shew all their niceness doing what God bids them, but none in letting of it alone. They are afraid of offending in coming to the Sacrament, but have no Fear of giving Offence in staying away from it: as if God had only forbid them to receive unworthily, but had no where forbid them to absent themselves, and not receive at all.

But this, as I have already shewn, is a very wrong Judgment. For God doth as straitly *injoyn* a *Worthy*, as he *forbids* an *Unworthy* Communicating. He has given us his Command for it, and that too with such Notes and Circumstances above-mentioned, as shew he lays a particular weight upon it, and highly expects to be obeyed in it. So that if we would not bring Guilt upon our selves by sinning against him, we must make Conscience of *not coming* to the Sacrament, as well as of *irreverent Treating* and *Profanation* of it when we come.

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This then is very *Partial* and *Unfair* dealing, to be scrupulous only about the manner of *Performing* this Duty, but to have no scruple at all about the *Omission* of it: as if, when God Commands us to *do a thing*, not to do it at all, were not as much a Fault as to do it *wrong*; and it were not equally transgressed when we *Neglect*, as when we *Prophane* it, And if all those, who are full of Fear about *Unworthy Receiving*, would be but as Fearful of *Sinful abstaining*; this equal Fear on both sides would make them diligent in seeking satisfaction, and in carrying on the Work of Preparation: so that they might neither offend by *coming*, nor by *staying away*, but worthily approach the Lords Table, and be heartily welcome to it when they do.

2. Every Penitent, who is Resolv'd to leave his Sins, and has begun the Change, is really worthy; so that the thoughts of unworthiness ought not to put him by it.

He is a true Penitent, who considers of all Gods Laws, and is resolved to keep them; and of all his own Sins, and is resolved to leave them: and so, changing his former evil Course and Practice becomes a New Man. And whosoever does this, he is a fit Person, and worthy to come to the Holy Communion. For all the particulars

lars of Worthy Receiving, are Instances of Duty, as has been observ'd, and parts of a Good Man; so that every man, who turns Penitent and becomes Good, will be endowed with all of them. Nay, if any man were to learn them, there would be no difficulty in any thing else, if *Repentance* would go down with him: So that any Person who Repents, may do every thing else which God Requires of him. The great things expected of us at this Feast, as has been said, are these; namely, That we *give thanks for Christs Death, and resign our selves up to his Service, and Repent of all our Sins, and be in Love and Charity with all Persons, and have Faith in Christ and his Merits*: And all these are easie, and create no great difficulty to a Penitent Person. For it is not an easie thing for him to *thank Christ*, who verily believes he *died* for him? And cannot he readily *resign* himself up to his use, who has already given himself up to an *Holy Life*, which is all the use that he would make of him? And is not he in *Peace and Charity* with all men, who has *Repented* of all his Sins, and then surely of *Malice and Unpeaceableness* among them? And doth not he *believe in Christ*, i.e. doth not he *believe those things which his Saviour Christ has declared to him,*

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him, viz. That he dyed for us to purchase Terms of Grace; and that now, for his sake, God will forgive us any Sins, when we Repent of them, and help us by his Spirit to any Graces when we endeavour after them, and give us Eternal Life in Heaven when we intirely obey him, but that otherwise, than upon these Terms, he will not give us any of them; which are those Declarations he makes to us in the Scriptures, and wherein he expects to be trusted and believed by us: Doth not every Penitent man, I say, believe all this, who is at the Pains to live according to it, and Repents that he may be pardoned, and endeavours that he may be assisted, and obeys that he may be graciously rewarded for it? All this Faith, which is required to the Communion, is necessary to Repentance, and is shewn in it; for we should not leave Intemperance, Fraud, Malice, or any other sin that is strongly recommended to us, unless we believed God had forbid it, and would now for Christs sake freely forgive, and eternally Reward those who Repent of it. And all this Thankfulness, and Resignation, and Peace, and Charity towards all men, which are likewise required, are not only easie after it, but are parts of it. For if we are unthankful for Christs Benefits, or unresigned to his use, or out

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of *Charity* with any Persons, we have yet *Repented* of all our sins, but, as to *these* at least, are still *Impenitent*. So that where once Repentance of all our Sins is, there is, or may be in us every thing else, which God requires at this Feast to fit us worthily to partake of it.

Thus is every true Penitent fit to eat at the Table of his Lord, and to be a worthy Communicant. And therefore when any persons do from their Hearts Repent them of all their Sins, and are fully purposed to lead new Lives thence-forwards; let them not be afraid to come to the Sacrament, for they are truly such as God accounts worthy of it. If they have not shaken hands with their sins, indeed, but live still in them, and are ready to repeat them on the next occasion, they will come unworthily whilst they are in that state, and not be made the better, but the worse for it. But if they have broke loose from them, and have been acted by Gods Fear, and led new Lives for some time; and are still putting out more endeavours, & praying for more Grace to do this yet more perfectly: They are the Persons whom God calls to this Feast, and may justly expect to receive an hearty welcome at it.

Nay,

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Nay, if their Return to God has been so late, as that they have not yet had time sufficient for *well-doing*, but only for *holy purposing* that they will do well as often as they shall have occasion, Yet, if out of a *serious Conviction* of the detestableness of every sinful Course, they are resolv'd to leave it,; and after a *due Consideration* of every part of their Duty, they are fully, and without all reserve resolved to practice it; I doubt not, but that this will and purpose, before the time and opportunities for *Practice* come, will render them welcome Guests, and worthy to Communicate. For whatever Rigors afterwards came in, not from the *Nature* of the Sacrament it self, or the *Necessity* of the thing, but only through the *Discretionary Power* of the Church, and the *Rules* of Discipline, thus I think tis plain it did in the *Apostles times*. For the *three thousand Souls*, whom St. Peter Converted at one Sermon, did not stay till they had opportunities of performing; but were admitted that very day, upon their inward change and resolution, to the *Apostles Fellowship*, and therein to the *Holy Sacrament*, which was a part of it. They that gladly received his Word, says St. Luke, were Baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand Souls.

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And all these continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers, Act. 2. 41, 42. And when the Apostles went about to Convert the World, they admitted men presently to Baptism and the Christian Worship, upon their Profession of Faith in Christ and being Penitent, without staying to see them practise what they had promised, as appears in the Converts now

mentioned, and the story of the † Eunuch: And when they were admitted to the Christian Worship, they were admitted to the Communion too, because in the Apostles Days, as † Part. I. Chap. 3. I have † shewn, that was an ordinary part of it, and always went along with it.

If any Persons then have already left their sins, and do not willingly allow themselves in any of them; if they have been striving long against them, and are daily gaining ground, and making a more perfect conquest of them: Nay, if they, who, since their return to God, have not had time to perform all this, are yet fully and deliberately purposed, and without all Reserve, resolv'd in themselves so to do: They are the Persons whom God invites to

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to this Feast, they are *worthy* to come to it, and will be sure to meet with a kind and hearty entertainment. *God and they* are fully agreed in their own Thoughts, and the terms of Reconciliation betwixt them are consented to on *both* sides. For he proclaims *Mercy* upon Repentance, and they thankfully accept it; he offers to return into Favour with every Sinner that will amend his Faults, and they are glad of the joyful News, and fully resolve to do it. And since they are both agreed upon the thing, what should hinder them from coming to the Sacrament, which he has appointed for this very End, that therein they may give their express consent to this Agreement, and mutually make this Declaration.

Thus is every man, who has left his sins, and begun to lead a New Life; or, who is fully purposed in his own mind, and absolutely intends so to do; a welcome Guest at this Feast, and worthy to Communicate: So that no apprehensions of unworthiness ought to put him by it.

And as for those who neither have left all their sins, nor are determined in their own hearts, and wholly bent upon it; they are plainly *Impenitent*, and thereupon most unworthy to Communicate. But then,

3ly, *That Impenitence, which unfits them*



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*for the Sacrament, is no excuse at all for the neglect of it.*

*Impenitence* will excuse a man in no act, but is it self a very great aggravation of it. It is no *extenuating Plea*, but a *Damning Fault*; so that no man must ever hope to escape the easier after he has omitted any Duty, by giving it as the Reason for it. When God calls us to the Sacrament, to promise him that we will amend our Faults, and lead new Lives thenceforward; if we return Answer, that we *come not* because we are *Impenitent*, that is as much as to say, we *come not* as he bids because we *will not*, which is certainly the worst plea that ever was made for any offence, and can never render his Case better, but much worse that uses it.

As for those then, who keep away because they are *Impenitent*; they are left without all Plea, and have no excuse at all to make for their not coming to the Holy Sacrament. The only thing that can stand them instead, either as to it, or as to any thing else, is their Repentance and Amendment; which they will not delay, if they consider in how great need they stand of it. For, as I said,

4ly. *Impenitent men, who are unworthy of the Sacrament, if they understand the danger*

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ger and misery of their state, can by no means continue in it, but must forthwith Repent and Amend, and then this hindrance is gone, and they may worthily approach to it.

If they understand the danger and misery of their state, I say, they cannot continue in it. For so long as they remain Impenitent in many, or in any one known sin, they are not only unfit to receive the Sacrament, as I have shewn, but also to say their Prayers, to give Thanks, to make Vows, or to have any thing to do with God in any other part of Religious Worship and Service. They are shut out from all benefits of Religion, they have no Salvation by Christ, nor any hopes of Heaven. If they happen to dye suddenly whilst they are in this state, or are call'd away before the work of Reformation is finished, (as 'tis greatly to be fear'd they may, if they put it off for the present, and as in all likelihood they will if they delay it till their Death-bed, at which time 'tis a very rare thing for any man to go through with it) they will go to Hell, there to be tormented with the insupportable Anguish of a wounded Conscience, and unsatisfied Appetites, and a raging Fire, and all the Terrors and Disconsolation of Darkness, and the utmost malice of Devils and Damn'd Spirits, and the high-

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*est Shame and Confusion of Face* : All which they must undergo without any *Eye to Pity*, or *Friend to Comfort* them, or any one to refresh them, or any *Abatement*, or *Intermission*, for evermore. And this is a state of such Horror and Astonishment, as no man, that looks upon it, can abide in : It is a condition of such extreme danger, as no one in his Wits can willingly endure. So that if any of those, who are *Impenitent*, will but be at the pains to lay to heart, and consider of the sadness of their state ; they can by no means persist in it, but will run with haste to Repent, and instantly set about the amendment of their ways, that so they may be delivered from it.

And as soon as ever they do so, this hindrance is gone, and they are worthy to come to to the Holy Communion. For that which fits us for it, is not an *high Pitch and Perfection in saving Virtues*, or *Ecstatick Degrees and Transports in Devotion*, as I have shewn ; but such true Repentance and change of Life, either in Deed, or at least in Will and Purpose, as makes us acceptable and honest Christians. So that whatever we were before, whilst we continued impenitently wicked, we are meet Partakers of this Holy Feast, now we have Repented, and are fully resolved

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solv'd to become Obedient, and need not scrupulously draw back, but come to it gladly when we are call'd, and expect a Friendly welcome when we do.

And thus I have consider'd this great, and most common Plea, whereby so many are kept back from the Holy Sacrament, viz. *their thinking themselves unworthy of it, and unfit to receive it; and shewn plainly that no ill man can be excused, and that no good man ought to be hindered by it.* And the Result of it is this. If any Person tells me he cannot come to this Feast, because he is *unworthy to joyn in it*: I must tell him again, That he *must not only be afraid of unworthy coming to it, but also of unworthy abstaining from it*; and that *unless he is impenitent, and still unresolv'dd to leave all his Sins, he is worthy of it*; and that if *such Impenitence is the cause of his not coming, it is no excuse for it*; and that *he must consider of thee danger and misery of that state, and so Repent and get out of it*; and when once that is done he will be worthy, since *every Penitent is welcome to it.* If he is *truly Penitent, he is worthy*; and if he has not Repented yet, he *must instantly Repent, that he may be worthy*: And then let him not hold off from this Heavenly Banquet, but chearfully approach to it when he is invited.

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2ly, Others, who cannot positively say they are unworthy of it, are yet kept back from the Holy Sacrament, because of the great danger of unworthy Communicating, Damnation being said to be eaten in it, which seems to make abstaining from it the safer side. He that eats and drink unworthily, says St. Paul, eats and drinks Damnation to himself, 1. Cor. 11. 29.

Now in Answer to this, I shall observe, that by Damnation is meant,

1. A Damning sin,, which is deadly to any man till he Repent of it; and such are both unworthy eating, and sinful abstaining, so that they are equal as to that Point.

2. Temporal Death and Punishments, vvhich vvvere inflicted on the Corinthians for their Intemperance at this Feast, and other Disorders which were peculiar to those times, and are not usual now in ours? so that the Fear of them need not discourage us from it.

1st, I say, By eating his own Damnation, the Apostle means not that he shall inevitably be damn'd for it; but only that he commits a Damning Sin, which will prove deadly to him unless he Repent of it: And this is true, not only of unworthy eating, but also of sinful abstaining, so that they are equal as to that Point.

He means not, I say, that he shall inevitably

ably be Damn'd for it. And this is plain, because for Christs sake, God has promised to forgive all our Sins upon Repentance, and therefore this of unworthy receiving among the rest. Nay, as for this their unworthy eating, the Apostle tells the Corinthians in that very place, that when they are Judg'd, or Condemned for it, it is not to consign them to, but to deliver them from Eternal Torment. When we are Judg'd, says he, or Condemn'd for this Fault, i. e. to be sick and weak, vvhich God inflicted because of it; we are not in Anger Punish'd, but in Mercy Chast'ned of the Lord by present Sufferings, that we should not at the last day be Condemn'd with the World to Eternal, 1 Cor. 11. 30, 31.

But only that he commits a \* Damning Sin, which will prove deadly to him, unless he repent of it. He that eats this Bread, and drinks this Cup unworthily, says he, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. i. e. unless his Repentance, that Gospel Remedy for all sin, prevents it, he shall be liable to be punish'd, not only for an abuse in Meat and Drink, as if it were only Common Food; but for violating and prophaning the Body and Blood of Christ, vvhich he should have discern'd in it, 1 Cor. 11. 27, 29. And

\* So St. Chrysost. understands it. Vid. Chrys. in v. 32, 34.

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And this is true, not only of *unworthy eating*, but also of *sinful abstaining* from the Sacrament. For *that* our Lord has expressly forbidden, as I have shewvn, and that too in such sort as shewvs he lays a great vveight upon in it; so that vve most highly offend him in it, and cannot expect to regain his Favour till vve Repent and Amend it; and therefore they are *both equall as to that Point*. We shall be Condemned, vvithout Amendment, for unvvorthy eating, and so vve shall too for sinful abstaining. And therefore if the Fear of Damnation be of Force vvith us, it must keep us off from both of them, and neither suffer us to neglect this Feast, nor to prophane it, but ingage us to come to it *worthily, i. e.* vvith Penitent Hearts, vvhensoever vve are call'd thereto.

2ly, By *Damnation* the Apostle means *Temporal Death and Punishments*, which God did then inflict on *unvvorthy Communicants*. And this vvvas not for all *unvvorthinefs*, but particularly for their *Intemperance at this Feast*, and other Disorders which were peculiar to those Times, and are not vsual now in ours: So that the Fear of them need not discourage us from it.

By *Damnation*, I say, he means *Temporal Death and Punishments*, which God did then inflict on *unvvorthy Communicants*. This  
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he plainly intimates, vvhhen he sets dovvn *weakness, and sickness, and Death*, as the *Penalties*, vvhereto they vv ere Condemnd for their unvvorthy usage. *He that eats and drinks unworthily*, says he, *eats and drinks Damnation to himself*, vvhereof you have many sad Examples novv in *Corinth*, for for this very Cause of unvvorthy eating, many novv are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, 1 Cor. 11. 29, 30.

And this God inflicted, not for all unvvorthiness, but particularly for some high and heinous Disorders, such as their open Schisms, and gross Intemperance crept in by occasion of their Love-Feasts, vvvhich Prophanations vv ere peculiar to those times, and are not now usual, or any vvhere to be seen in ours.

They came to the Sacrament in open Schisms, not eating altogether vvhen they met in the same house, but Scandalously dividing into Factionous Clans, and separate Tables. When ye come together in the Church, and meet all in one place, says the Apostle, *I hear there be*  
 \* Schisms or Divisions among you, or that you bandy in Parties, and do not meet all as one Body, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20.

They came to also in a most scandalous

\* Σχιζματα.



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*lous Excess and gross Intemperance, which Vice, though so confessedly loathsome in all other places, had yet, by occasion of their Love-Fests, crept into this most solemn part of the Christian Worship and Service. St. Jude seems to charge the Gnosticks, those Sensual and Luxurious Persons, with some such Fault. They are spots, says he, in your Feasts of Charity, when they Feast with you, feeding themselves without Fear, i. e. so freely, as shews they have no Fear of God, or of the Solemnity and Religion of the Feast, Jude, 12. And so doth St. Peter more plainly in his Description of the same men, 2 Pet. 2. 13. They count it pleasure to riot in the day time, says he, Spots they are and Blemishes, sporting themselves, or being † Luxurious with their own \* Deceivings, as we read it; but in some Manuscripts*

*of greatest Authority, particularly the Alexandrian, with which agrees the Translation of the*

*† Vulgar Latin, is it being Luxurious in their \* Feasts of Charity when they Feast with you, v. 13.*

*And with a like excess*

*Socrates charges the Egyptians a good while*

† Εὐτρουπῶντες

\* Εὐ ταῖς αἰσῶσι  
τα. 5.

† It reads, Deliciis affluentes, not Fraudibus.

\* Εὐ ταῖς αἰσῶσι  
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while afterwards. For  
\* they, says he, *Communi-*  
*cate at Even after they*  
*are full fed, and have*  
*glutted themselves at their*  
*Love-Feast with all the*  
*Varieties of a choise Ban-*  
*quet.* And because the  
*Love Feasts ministr'd oc-*  
*casion for such excess,*  
and made way for several

abuses, they came in time to be wholly  
laid aside in *Communions*. And to prevent  
that *Intemperance* which they had introdu-  
ced, it was order'd generally that men  
should receive *Fasting*, contrary to what  
our Lord did at first, which  
was ratified by a † *De-*  
*cre* in the *Third Council*  
*of Carthage*, held near  
400 years after the *Birth*  
of our Saviour Christ.

Now this *Intempe-*  
*rance*, which had crept  
into the *Love-Fests*, and  
so mixt with the Holy  
Sacrament which always  
went along with them,  
was another most shameful offence, which  
St. Paul reprov'd in the *Corinthian Com-*  
*munion*s. They did not only change this  
Ordi-

\* Μετὰ τὸ  
ἑσπέρην θῆναι, καὶ  
παντὶν ἐξαρ-  
τῶν ἑμφορῶν θῆναι,  
οἱ ἐστρωθὲν ὑπο-  
φύροντες, τῶν  
μουσείων μέτε-  
λ' ἡμῶν. Soc.  
Hist. Eccles. l. 5.  
c. 22. p. Ed. Val.  
287.

† Ut Sacra-  
menta Altaris  
non nisi à jejunis  
hominibus cele-  
brentur, excep-  
to uno die anni-  
versario, quo cœ-  
na Domini cele-  
bratur. Concil.  
Carth. 3. Can. 29.  
apud. Bin. Vol.  
prim. Concil. p.  
711.

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*Ordinance of Union* into a *Factions meeting*, by falling into separate Gangs and Parties when they came to it : But also turned this *Pure and Holy Treat* into a *drunken Club*, and a *Riotous Entertainment*. In your eating, says he, every one as he comes sooner, takes before other his own Supper, and one, being poor, is hungry, through the smallness of his Provisions, and another, being Rich, is Drunken through the excess of his, 1 Cor. 11. 21. And upon this *Schismatical and intemperate eating*, he lays the danger of that *Judgment or Condemnation*, which God was wont in those days to inflict on them. If any man pretend hunger, says he, for these Greediness and Intemperance, let him eat at home, that so ye come not together at the Lords Supper, as now ye do, to *Condemnation*, v. 34.

Now these *scandalous Irregularities*, but especially this *Intemperance* at the Lords Table, for which God was so severe upon the *Corinthians*, is no Crime in the Communicants of our Days, when among all the Unworthy Receivers, none are so by reason of excess; but was peculiar to theirs, when with the Sacrament they always joyn'd their *Love-Feasts*, that were lyable to be abused to *Gluttony* and *Drunkenness*. And as the Fault, so also the  
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*Punishment* took place only among them, but is not usual now with us, who do not see our unworthy Communicants smitten by the hand of God, and struck down by *Miracle* into *Death* or *Diseases*. And therefore the apprehension of this Judgment need not at all discourage us from the Holy Sacrament; since, from our observation of the World, we have no reason to expect, that, if indeed we come unworthily, we shall fall under it.

As for this *Damnation* then, which the *Apostle* charges on *unworthy eating*, it either signifies a *Damning Sin*, and that is true of *willful abstaining* as well as of *unworthy receiving*; or a *Temporal Punishment* miraculously inflicted for their *Drunkenness*, and *Intemperance*, wherewith at that time they polluted and prophaned this Holy Feast, which was a thing peculiar to those days, and is not now derived down to ours, so that we have no just cause to be deterred by it.

Thus it is, if really we should come *unworthily* to the Sacrament, we only commit a *Damning Sin*, as we should do by *willful abstaining*, which will be forgiven us afterwards upon the same Terms whereon God forgives us all other Sins, *i. e.* our *Repenting* of it, and amend-  
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ing it. But if we are truly *Penitent*, and have broke off all our evil ways, intending fully to lead new Lives thenceforwards; then we may assure our selves that we are *worthy* and welcome Guests, and are not concerned in this Damnation threatned to *unworthy* Communicants at all.

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*Of three other Hindrances from  
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The Contents.

A Third Hindrance is, because therein they are to promise concerning every sin, that they will no more commit it ; which Promise some dare not make , because they fear they shall not keep it. If this be sufficient to hinder any man from the Communion, it ought also to hinder him from Prayers, and being Baptized a Christian. But it must not hinder men from any of them. 1. Let them Promise this Amendment, and keep it, and then the Doubt is answered. They ought to make it. And by Gods Grace they may perform it , if they have a mind to it. 2. If after some time they happen to break it in any Instance, they have the Benefit of Repentance afterwards. A Fourth Hindrance is the great difficulty supposed to be in it, and want of time and leisure to prepare for it. This lies not more  
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against the Communion, than against an Holy Life and all Religion. But it must not put us by from any of them. For, 1. If it required all that time and pains which is supposed, that would be no excuse for any of us to neglect it. To true Penitents, the time and pains is not so great as is imagined. It requires more of ill men, but less of good, who may prepare for it in a less time, yea, if used to Self-examinations, upon a few minutes warning. 3. The poorest and most employed have time sufficient if they would use it to that end: And where they have fewer helps, and less time, the less preparation is accepted of them. A Fifth Hindrance is, because they see others, or have found themselves to be no better by it; so that 'tis not worth their while to fit themselves for it. If this have any Force, it is not to be restrained to the Sacraments, but holds stronger against Prayers, and other parts of Worship. But it ought not to hinder any Persons. For, 1. Where it is true there is no excuse from it. 2. In all good mens case 'tis false, for they are really better by it; many by improving in their goodness, all by continuing in it, for which it is richly worth their pains to come to it. 3. Where they are not bettered at all, or not so much as might be expected; that

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is purely through their own Fault, in not using the means of improving by it : So let them amend that, and this Hindrance is removed.

**A** Third thing that keeps back several from the Sacrament, though both in Duty to their Saviour, and in tenderness to their own Souls, they are most straitly bound to frequent it, is because therein they are to promise concerning every sin they find themselves guilty of, that they will no more commit it ; and this Promise they dare not make, because they fear they shall not keep it.

Now as for these Persons, I would desire them to consider, that if this be a sufficient hindrance to keep them from this Ordinance, it is equall so to keep them from their Prayers, nay, from their Very Baptism, and being enroll'd Christians. For God will not hear their Prayers for the Pardon of any Sin till they Repent of it, and resolve within themselves, and make him Faithful promises that they will never more commit it. Nor did he admit them to Baptism, to be listless Members of his Church, till they had Renounced the Devil and all his works, with all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, and promised to keep his Holy Will and Commandments,



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*ments, and walk in the same all the days of their Lives.* If we stick at these Promises, then we must scruple saying our Prayers, and boggle at all Religion, and, if we were yet *unbaptized*, upon this account refuse our Baptism, since therein we *did*, and *ought* to make as large and express promises of leaving all our sins, as we *can*, or are *required* to make in the *Holy Communion*.

But to those, who are afraid of the Holy Sacrament upon this account, I have these two things to add.

1. *Promise this Amendment, and keep it, and then the Doubt is answered.*

2. *Though after some time they should forget themselves, and break it in some Instance, yet still they have the benefit of Repentance afterwards.*

1<sup>st</sup>, I would advise them to *promise this amendment and keep it, and then the Doubt is answered.* When the Objection against *promising*, is only the danger of *performing*, when they both *can*, and *ought* to perform it; it is an objection that lies only against *themselves*, in a suspicion that they will be wanting to their own bounden Duty and Service: And that is better removed by their care faithfully to discharge it, than by any thing that I can say to it. They *ought to perform it,*  
and

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and if they will, they may do it ; and therefore let them be careful to do that, and this difficulty is ended.

*They ought, I say, to perform this Amendment which they promise to Almighty God, and leave every sin which formerly they have committed. God will not forgive us any Fault, whilst we persist Impenitent, and continue to repeat it ; but requires first, on our part, that we forsake and amend it. Sin no more,* says our Saviour to the *Woman taken in Adultery,* and then *will not I condemn thee,* Joh.8.4.11. And, *Let the Wicked man forsake his ways,* says God by *Ishaiab,* and return unto the Lord, and then he will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon, Isa. 5. 7. It is no indifferent matter that is left to our own choice, whether we will leave our sins, or no ; but the thing must of necessity be done, if ever we hope to appease God, or go to Heaven. So that we must not be less forward to promise, for that is our Duty, but more careful to perform.

And as they *ought* to perform this amendment, which they promise to Almighty God ; so by *his Grace* they may perform it, if they will, and have a mind to it. When at this Feast they say they will never commit, *this or that* sin any more as God has required ; they say not that  
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they will never be *surprized* into it, but that they will never act it *willfully*, i. e. when they see and are aware of it; or, if at any time they do, that they will not *persist* in it, but *amend* it, *Repentance* always going along from the *beginning* to the *end* of the *Gospel Covenant*. And this by *Gods help* they all may do, if they make it their serious business, and lay out their utmost care and pains upon it. For when a mans *Conscience* tells him that the thing is *sinful* which he is about to act, or at least he could readily see it, if he would direct his Eye to it; he need not go on unless he will, but, if he please, may instantly turn away from it. This, I say, he may do; for if he will not be wanting to himself, God will not be wanting to him in it, but enable him effectually to abstain from it when it truly endeavours it. If once we are careful to *work out our own Salvation*: St. Paul assures that he *will work in us both to will and to do*, Phil. 2. 12. 13. *To him that hath*, i. e. employs what he hath, our Saviour promises that *more shall still be given*, Mat. 25. 29. And elsewhere again, *God will give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him*, Luc. 11. 13.

And since they may perform this Amendment if they will, and ought to perform it if ever they hope to be accepted; let them  
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but be careful so to do, and then this Hindrance will give them no more trouble, but be quite removed. They will have no cause to be slow to promise, what they will be thus honestly careful to perform.

2. Though afterwards they should forget themselves, and break this promise in some instance; yet is not their case desperate thereupon, but they have still the benefit of Repentance afterwards.

Indeed, if they break it as soon as ever they have made it, and run constant changes in sinning and repenting, performing this time, and transgressing it the next; that Repentance will be of no avail with God, because it rests only in fair Words and Promises, or, at best, in some faint attempts, without any real Reformation and Amendment. Nay, if they fall a Second time into some sins, which lay waste the Conscience, such as Murther, Adultery, wilful Perjury, and the like, which few good men can ever incur at first, and fewer can afterwards Repeat, when once they have smarted for it: It may still give cause why the sufficiency of their Repentance should be questioned. But if in sins which are more ordinarily incurred, as Discontent, Pride, Revenge, Backbiting, Passion, &c. which are generally meant by those who are kept back by this Impe-

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diment;

diment: If after they have promised to leave *these* sins, I say, they go on for some due time to make good their word, and avoid the fault in several opportunities that lead them to it, but at last happen to forget themselves, and break it in some Instance: yet doth not that null their former Repentance, or make their Case desperate thereupon; but they have still the *benefit of Repentance afterwards*, and by amending what they have done amiss, may be perfectly restored and made whole again. For God will pardon us upon our *Repentance*, not only *Once*, or a *Second* time, but as *often* as there is occasion. So that if after we have promised in the Sacrament, that we will never more be guilty of any particular sin, we yield to it at length, and are a-new overcome: let us but Repent of that Breach, and fully resolve against it a second time, and then we are made whole as we were in our former station.

As for this Hindrance then, whereby some are kept back from the Sacrament, viz. Their *promising therein concerning every Fault that they will no more commit it*, which promise they dare not make, because they are afraid they shall not keep it: it need not stick with them, nor ought to hinder any man that pretends to Religion.

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ligion. For let them *promise this Amendment*, and *keep it*, and then the *Doubt is answered*. Or, if after they have kept it for some time, they happen to *fail upon some occasion*; let them *Repent of that Breach*, and make *new Promises and Resolutions*, and then they are *whole again*. And all this has nothing in it that *can be avoided*, or *ought to be feared*, but is all *necessary and desirable to be done*: for it is their *Duty thus to promise*, and their *Duty to perform*, and their great *Priviledg*, that, if they fail in any instance afterwards, upon repeating their *Repentance* they shall receive a *Pardon*. It is what every man must do, not only to be a *worthy Communicant*, but to be a *Christian*. For the same things are promised in *Prayer*, and in *Holy Baptism*: so that if any man draw back from *them*, and sticks to *promise them*; he must not *pray to God*, nor pretend to *Religion*, nor; were he to chuse again, be *baptized into the Christian Profession*.

4. A *Fourth* thing which keeps back several from the Sacrament, Is *the great difficulty they apprehend to be in a worthy Receiving of it*, and *their want of time and leisure to prepare for it*. They fancy it is a very *hard* thing for any man *worthily to Communicate*; and since 'tis *hard*,

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it must needs require much *time* and *application* to prepare themselves for it: and as for their parts, they have little *leisure* from their *business*, and are not made to *master Difficulties*; so that they must be content, and hope they shall be excused, if they abstain from it.

This *objection* many are ready to make against coming to the Communion. But every Christian will be much ashamed of it, and slow to urge it a *second* time, when once he considers, that it lies not more against it, than against an *Holy Life*, and *all Religion*. For all the particulars of worthy Communicating, as I have shewn, are equally parts of indispensable Duty, and a good man. God has required no more *Virtues* in us at the *time of Receiving*, than he requires at *all other times* to render us *acceptable Christians*, to fit us to say our *Prayers*, or to give us any *hopes of Eternal Happiness*. So that if any man says the work of the Sacrament is *over-hard*, and therefore he is *not willing*, or *wants time* to fit himself for Receiving: he may as well say he is *not willing*, or *wants time* to be a *Christian*, or to go to *Heaven*, and upon that Plea may with equal Reason bid adieu to *all Religion*.

But to answer this more particularly, I must observe to them, 1. That

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1. That if it did really require all this time and pains to prepare for it, yet would that be no sufficient Reason or Excuse for any of us to Neglect it.

2. That to all true Penitents it is not so difficult, nor requires so much time as is imagined; so that they have not so much as this Discouragement to make them backward in it.

3. That all, even the poorest and most employed, have time sufficient, if they will use it to that end; and that of those, who have less leisure and abilities, so as that they cannot fit themselves in great Degrees, God expects the less preparation, and accepts it at their hands.

1. I say, If it did really require all this time and pains to prepare for it which is supposed, yet would that be no sufficient Reason or Excuse for any of us to neglect it. For when God bids us do a thing, can any man think it a good excuse to say, I would if it were not troublesome, or long a doing? Must we perform those things only at his Command, which are easie, and soon over; but neglect all others, which imploy more care and pains, and require to be attended longer? How we may like such *Masters*, I will not say, but I am sure God will entertain no such *Servants* as will pick and chuse with his Commands, and obey them no further than



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their *own ease* and *occasions* will suffer them. No, he expects we should do him Service, though it be with difficulty and loss to our own selves. And this in all Reason *he* may very well require of *us*, because *we* our selves, who can plead no such *Deserts*, nor make any such *Recompences* as he proposes, do all look for it from *our Servants*, in any business they are to do for *us*. For if we set them to any work, we shall think it a very odd Answer, if they tell us they would do it for us, but that they are unwilling to be at *so much pains*, or to spare *so much time* as it requires.

Although a worthy Communicating then would require much time and pains to prepare for it, yet would not that be a just excuse for any Person to Neglect it. For since God *Commands it*, nay, *Commands it urgently*, and lays a great weight upon it; we are bound in all Duty to perform it, though it cost us both *time* and *pains* so to do.

But,

2. *To all true Penitents it is not so difficult, nor requires so much time as is imagin'd; so that they have not so much as this Discouragement to make them backward in it.*

The Difficulty of worthy Receiving lies not in giving Christ Thanks, or believing  
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the *Scripture* and all its Promises, as I have shewn; but only in *Repenting of all our Sins*. And this, indeed, has more difficulty in it, and requires more time to ill men, who are held *Captives by them*; but not very much to good, who are already set free, and have broke off from them.

1. I say, *Repenting of all their Sins, and amendment of their Lives, has more difficulty in it, and requires more time to ill men*. For they have many Lusts to pare off which are very dear to them; and many things to set straight, which cannot all be done upon the sudden. When they come to enter upon a good Life, who as yet are strangers to it; they must consider particularly of all *God's Laws* which are the Rule of it, and examine their own Hearts at every one, to see against which of them they have offended, and there make their particular purposes, and full resolutions of Amendment. They must spend time and pains upon this examination, to bring them to a Penitent purpose, and a deliberate well-weighed Resolution. and when that is done, it will cost them more time and pains still in frequent Tryals, as in the course of Life and Business they meet with opportunities to practise and perform what they have resolv'd upon. For, when upon a strict Review of their whole Lives

they find they have several sins to amend, they must not think, after they have resolved against them, to get perfectly quit of them on the *sudden*. But they must withstand the Temptations to them *once and again*, and pass through frequent Tryals, and exercise themselves in many Conflicts, before they will have got the Conquest, and be indeed reformed from them.

Thus will it require both much time and pains for an *ill man* to become good, and not only to *Resolve* that he will amend all his ways, but to put in *practice* and *perform* it too.

'Tis true, indeed, I cannot say the *actual amendment* of every Fault, and the *performance* as well as *purpose* of obeying in every Commandment, is necessary to a *worthy Communicant*. For a *full Resolution* of amendment, without staying for time and opportunities to fulfil it, is sufficient to fit us for this Feast; as I have observ'd it did in the *Apostles Days*, when, upon their first Conversion and becoming Penitent, before they had time to perform what they had promised, men were admitted to the Sacrament, as to other Parts of Worship. So that the Repentance required of us to a worthy Communion, will not take up all that time,  
which

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which is necessary to amend a whole Life, and to practise all the Duties of a Good man.

But although it will not call for all that time which is necessary to a *New Life and Practice*; yet will it require all that which is necessary to beget and actuate a *New Heart and Purpose*; and that will be much more in *ill*, than it will be in *good* men. For when ill men examine themselves, to find out all their Sins, that they may resolve against them; they have many *more sins* to Repent of, and employ their minds upon; and are more *Strangers* to their *own Hearts and Lives*; having never observed or looked into them, and so need the greater *Labour of Recollection*, and more *hardness of Heart*, and *coldness of Spirit*, so that they do not so easily *renounce* them, nor can so *readily* and *fully Resolve* against them, when they have discovered them, as good men can.

As for this Repentance of all their sins then, which consists not in an *actual amendment* of them, but in *full Purposes* and *Resolutions* never more to commit them, which is sufficient to a worthy Communion: It has more *difficulty* in it, and requires more *time* than *ordinary* to *ill men who are held Captives by them*.

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But,

2. *It doth not require very much to good, who are set free, and have broke off from them.*

The great thing which they have to do, is, to *examine what are their Faults*, and to find out their own miscarriages; for if once they *discover* them, they are so *habitually* set to amend every thing that is amiss, that they will quickly resolve against them. And this discovery they will make much *easier*, and *sooner*, than ill men can. For their Faults being fewer, are sooner run over; and their Consciences being tender, and used to observe them, they do better remember them, and are the readier, when they are asked, to give in an Information of them, than the others are. Indeed, if they do not accustom themselves to *Self-Examinations*, they will find no more to do, and need a long time, when they come to them: But if they are much vers'd in them, especially if they take an account of the *Day past every Evening*; having daily discovered and acknowledged all their Faults, they will bear them still in mind, and have an habitual sense of them; and so be able at any time, to tell what acts they are to promise and resolve upon, at a few minutes warning; as we  
may

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may well suppose they did in the first times, when they Communicated *every day*, and, under the *pressing wants* and *distractions* they conflicted with, could not set apart *whole hours* for preparation.

Thus is the work of *Preparation for the Communion*, not so difficult to true *Penitents*, nor requiring so much time as some have imagined. It may cost them some time whilst they employ there *Thoughts* in actuating their *Love* and *Thankfulness*, and other *Graces*, before they come; but if they have little leisure for it, this need not be long a doing; for most *good minds* are so *inclined* and *habituated* to these *Temper*s, that they can express them, and that too, answerable to the *Degree* of *Warmth* their *Complexion* allows in other things, with *Fervor* and *Intention*, upon any warning. But the great Work, which may seem to have *length* and *trouble* in it, is *Repentance of all their Sins*; and this will not be either *long*, or *troublesom* to them. For the only thing that will give them trouble in it, is, the Work of *Self-Examination*, to find out what their sins have been; their *Hearts* being so good, that they can quickly resolve against them, when once they have discovered them: And this they will not find tedious, but may dispatch in convenient time. If they

they were yet to begin the work of Reformation, indeed, they must spend more *hours*, or *days* upon it, and be held to it so long, till they could run over all *God's Laws*, and all *their own actions*, and work themselves up into *firm purposes* of amendment at every thing they find was done amiss through their whole Lives, which would be a more *tedious* and *painful* business: So that when *ill men* come to prepare themselves for the Sacrament, they must set out more time for it, and expect to pass through greater hardship. But then they must remember not to charge this upon the *Communion*, but upon a *New Life* and *Regeneration*; it not being for the work of worthy Receiving, but of Repentance and Reformation, which they must go through with whether they receive or no, that all this time is spent, and hard pains taken. But if they have begun to Repent long ago, and have endeavour'd carefully to become *good men*; a much less time will serve their turn: for they will be able presently to *resolve* against any Fault they see, being *habitually* set against all already; and also *see* all they have to repent of, upon a small Examination. If they have not been used to *frequent Examinations*, so as to have all their sins at hand before them; it may hold

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hold them a longer time: but if they have examined *often*, especially if they have reviewed and acknowledged *every Night* their *every Days* Transgressions, they will be able to do it at a *few minutes* warning. So that if they should happen at any time to be *surprized* with a Communion, which it is not *decent* for any good Christian to flinch from, though all would desire a more solemn preparation where they have time for it, yet can they fit themselves for it in that strait, and know what sins to resolve against upon a few moments Recollection.

But besides that *it would be no sufficient excuse to any Person to neglect the Holy Sacrament, though it required all that time and pains which is supposed; and that to all true Penitents it is not so tedious, or difficult as some have imagined, so that they have not so much as this discouragement to make them backward in it: I proceed now,*

3. To shew that *all, even the poorest and most employed, have time sufficient, if they will use it to that end; and that of those who have less leisure and opportunities, so as that they cannot fit themselves in great Degrees, God expects the less preparation, and accepts it at their Hands.*

*All men, I say, even the poorest and most*  
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*employed, have time sufficient to prepare for the Communion, if they would use it to that end.*

That which makes them apprehend they have no time for it, is a persuasion, that *all preparation must be carried on in the Closet*, when they are sequestred from all *worldly Affairs*, and have set themselves apart for *Devotion*, and *Religious Meditations*. And for doing this, they who are *full of business*, who must *labour* all the day long, till they have quite tired themselves, for *maintenance*, or whose time is not at their *own disposal*, but at the *will of others*, complain they have no leisure, or vacant time to spare.

But now, besides that no Persons must pretend they can find no time for *set Devotions*, and *separate Thoughts*, since the most employed of all can find it sometimes to throw away on *Vanity* and *Diversions*: This conceit, that *all preparation ought to be carried on in the Closet*, is a mistake; for, when any Persons are so minded, it may go on whilst they are *held at work*, and *ingaged* in the *course of their employment*. For the great business of Preparation, as has been shewn, lies in *examining our own hearts*, to find out what our sins have been, and in *resolving* particularly against them. And this a Man may carry on in any place, where

where he has liberty for Thought and Recollection. He may call to mind his own ways as he is on a Journey, or busie at his work; for Thought is free at all times, and every Man may consider and reflect whensoever he has a mind to it. And so long as he can find time for this, he has time enough to prepare himself, let his Condition be as dependant, or his time as much taken up, as it will.

And as for those, who have less leisure and opportunities, so as that they cannot fit themselves in great Degrees, God expects the less preparation, I say, and accepts it at their hands.

Thus much he expects of every Man, and that all may and must perform, viz. That they examin themselves about all those things which they know are sinful, and, wheresoever they find themselves Guilty, resolve stedfastly to do so no more, and humbly ask his Pardon; and that they have an affectionate thankful sense of Christ's Death, and of all that he has done for them. But as for the Degrees of these Duties, how high they shall be in their Detestation of every Sin, how ardent in their Acts of Resignation, how Passionate in their Love and Thankful Affection; though he is well pleased with it where he finds it, yet he exacts not the utmost height, as I have  
† observed,

† *Part I. Chap. 4.* † observed, in those who  
are fitter for it; nor

looks for more in any, than that every man return according to the opportunities which he has given him. Some have *Naturally* much *flame*, and *great vehemence* in all their *Passions*, and much *time* in their own hands, and much *help* from *good and intrevning books*, or *great quickness of Wit and parts*, which can readily and advantageously represent to their own minds the *motives* to these *Dispositions*; and these Persons are able to imprint an *higher measure* of them, and affect their own Hearts more deeply with them, than others of cooler tempers, and less leisure and fewer helps, and slower understandings, can ever hope to do. But when men have less time and abilities for them, God expects the less perfection and Degrees of them. For in these Cases, his Rule is this: *Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.* Luc. 12. 48.

And thus I have considered this *Fourth Hindrance*, and shewn that the difficulty of the thing, or the want of time, can be no just Reason or Excuse to keep any man from Receiving. And the sum of what I have suggested in this business, is this: *If it required all that time and pains which is supposed,*

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sed, that is no sufficient ground for any person to neglect it; because when God commands us to do a thing, as he has done most strictly in this Case, we must be willing to spend both time and pains upon it. But in reality, it is neither so painful nor tedious to good men, as is ordinarily imagined. It costs more, indeed, to ill men, because they have more faults to examine after, and more backwardness to resolve against them; but this expence of time and pains they must not impute to the Communion, but to an Holy Life and Regeneration, which, whether they Communicate or no, if they Love their own Souls they must labour and manfully endeavour in. But as for Good men, their great work is Self-examination, it being an easie thing for them to resolve against any sins when they see them; and this will not be long or tedious to them: nay, if they have been used to examine often, and to call themselves to an account every evening, if necessity so requires, it may be dispatch'd at a few minutes warning. It is a thing which all men, even the poor and most employed, may find time for, yea, when there is need of it, without hindring or neglecting any other affair, if they are careful to use it to that end; and when they have less leisure and abilities, so as that they

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they cannot *fit themselves* in great Degrees, there God expects the *less preparation*, and *accepts it* at their hands. To Communicate, is a most *necessary Duty*, which *will not be excused*; and a most *equitable* and *easie* one, which *need not to be declined*; so that no pretence of *hardship*, or of want of *time* ought ever to be urged, or can ever be allowed to put us by it.

5. A *Fifth* thing, which hinders several from the Sacrament, and makes them carelessly to neglect it, is, because *they see others, or have found themselves to be no whit bettered or improved by it*; so that 'tis not worth their while to *fit themselves* for it.

This is a plea, which some, who are pretty constant in *other Ordinances*, are wont to make for their great neglect of *this*. But if there be any weight in it, they are much to blame in restraining it to the *Sacrament*, since it would hold much stronger for their *not coming to Prayers, or the publick Assemblies, or other parts of Worship*. For these same Persons that make this Complaint, of being little better'd or improv'd by it, could say the same of *them* too if they had a mind to it. For they are much more frequent in *reading the Scriptures*, in *saying their Prayers*, in *hearing Sermons*, and in joyning

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ing in all other parts of Worship at the *Publick Assemblies*, than they are at this Ordinance; so that if they are no ways better'd under the *means of Grace*, that *unfruitfulness* ought least of all to be charged upon the *Sacrament*, for alas! it is but very seldom they are seen at it, but much more upon *praying to God*, and *hearing the Word*, and other parts of *Worship*. And therefore if unfruitfulness under any Ordinance be a Reason, not of using *greater care* in it, that they may get profit by it, but of a *negligent abstaining* from it; they are to blame in confining it to the *Communion*, since it would serve much more to excuse them from *Prayers*, and *Sermons*, and all other parts of *Worship* and *Devotion*.

But that none may be hindred by it from coming to this Feast, I shall observe,

1. That where it is true, there is no excuse from it.
2. That in all good mens case 'tis false, for they are really better by it.
3. That where they are not better'd at all, or not so much as might be expected, that is purely through their own Fault, and they must mend it.
1. Where 'tis true that they are no better by the *Sacrament*, that is no excuse for their neglect

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*neglect of it.* And this is plain, because we are not bound to Communicate only in *Interest*, so as when that ceases, we might be free from it ; but in *Duty* too, our Lord having most expressly required and enjoyn'd it. Had we nothing but our *own benefit* to engage us to it, then indeed, it would be a good Reason not to trouble ourselves with it, when we found we were no better by it. But God has made it our *Duty* to come, as we have seen, by an *express* and *indispensable Commandment* : And when there is God's *Law* and *Precept* in the Case, it is an ill excuse for any man who neglects it, to say he did so, because he could not hope to be a *gainer* by it. If we refuse to do what he bids us, when it brings in no Advantage to our selves, we cast off his Service, and begin to be acted by other Principles ; we do as good as tell him that we will do all things out of *Interest*, and with an eye to our *own profit*, but nothing for *his Pleasure*, and in obedience to his Commandment ; which is as much as to say, we will only *serve ourselves*, but not *serve him* at all.

2. *In all Good mens case 'tis false, for they are really made better by it.*

They are not better, perhaps, in what they *expect*, because their expectations are

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are not right, but they look for such benefits from the Sacrament, as God never intended by it; nay, such, it may be, as in this World he never means to convey to them, either by it, or by any other Instrument. And thus it is when men hope, after they have Communicated, to be *fill'd with sensible joys and transports*, to be *absolutely assured of Gods special Love and Kindness*, to be *freed thenceforward from all further Fears and Doubtings*, to have a *removal of some troublesome temptations*, to get quit of all *Thoughts and Desires*, and the very first motions to ill things, of all *dulness and distraction in their Devotions*, of all *sinful surprizes and involuntary escapes*, and such like. These are benefits, which although God out of his abundant Grace and Indulgence may sometimes allow to us, yet he has no where promised us, nor sees always fit for us; nay, some of them in this Estate do not agree to us, being Exemptions from such infirmities as are inseparable from our Natures: and therefore, when we come to the Sacrament, they are not to be expected in it. They are not of the number of those blessings vvhich are inseparably made over to it, or of those effects vvhich are always vvrought by it; so that vve have no Reason to complain of its being a barren,



ren, and unfruitful Ordinance, because they are with-held from us.

But although they are not benefited in *these* Respects, yet are they in *others*, which make it richly worth their while to fit themselves for this Feast, and are an abundant Recompence for all the pains they take in it. For, besides the *quieting of their Consciences*, though not with an *absolute Assurance*, (a pitch of hope that is very *rarely* found in any, even of the *best* Persons) yet with a very *comfortable sense of God's Love and Friendship*; which is an effect it will have in those good minds, who consider that therein they confirm'd the New Covenant with God, wherein he promised them pardon if they would Repent, and they profess'd to do it: Besides this effect, I say, of *quieting their Consciences*, it benefits them further in their *Graces and Virtuous indowments*. For, though some of them fear they are not, yet in reality *all Good-men are bettered by the Sacrament, some by improving, and all by continuing in their Goodness, which they ascribe to it.*

1. *Some Good men, I say, (and those, I hope, the greatest part) are better'd in the Sacrament, by an Improvement of those Graces which they bring along to it: They thank Christ more freely, and Love him more affecti-*

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affectionately, and are resign'd to him more intirely, and watch against those Temptations which were wont to win most upon them more carefully after every Receiving, than they did before. It spurs them on, where their pace was slackned; and makes them more mindful of any Duty, when they had forgot it; and brings them back to it, when they had strayed from it; and makes them Circumspect to discharge it, when they had been more remiss and careless of it: It helps Husbands, to be more tender and affectionate; Wives, to be more dutiful and observant; Children, to be more respectful, towardsly, and obedient; Servants, to be more Faithful, and Diligent; and all men to be more concerned to Honour God, to be more Humble and Temperate, True and Faithful, Just and Charitable, Meek and Peaceable; than they were before they partook of it. All these Virtues, Tempers and Dispositions, as there is need of them, and they can attend and apply their minds to them, are quickned and set on by it. And though this Holy Flame, which was kindled in their minds at the Altar, will burn dim, and grow cool again; and this Religious bent of Heart will slacken and be more remiss in time: Yet being afresh enlivened and intended by a new approach  
to

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to this Feast, the former *Ardors* will be revived, and the same bent established, and so they will be always advancing forward in a continual improvement.

This encrease of their Graces, and Augmentation of all virtuous Dispositions, especially of those wherein they are most defective, the Sacrament works in *many* good Persons, and 'tis very fit they should do it in *all*. And although I dare not say they are *unworthy* of it, or *unbetter'd* and *unfruitful* under it; yet I will say they are very much *wanting to their own Souls*, who are not careful to carry on; and attain this improvement by it. And if they examine their Growth in Grace and Goodness, by a Growth in these points; I believe the greatest part of careful and devout Receivers will find they are really made more perfect, and improved in Virtue by frequenting it.

Yea, I add further, they may be thus improved by it, though upon *Examination* they themselves should not be able to point out Determinately in *what*, or make a *clear Discovery* of it. For very few Persons do so strictly *observe the Degrees* of their own Attainments in any Virtues, with *what ease* they do them, and how feldome they sin against them, as may enable them to compare exactly the pitch of  
their

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their *present* Graces, with the pitch of the *same* Graces sometime *afterwards*. And if they should very narrowly observe them, yet would they not be able nicely to judge of every *small increase*. For *little* things are no more discernable in *Grace*, than they are in *Nature*, nor can be easier seen in *growing Virtues*, than in a *growing Man, or Tree, or other Natural Improvements*. And besides, since the Grace which the Sacrament is to improve in us, is so *diffused*, and extends to so *many* instances; when really we have gain'd and advanced in it, yet may it be hard for us to recollect, and shew determinately in *what*, and specify it in the *Particulars*. It is so I am sure in *knowledge*, which is another thing wherein the instances are so *infinitely numerous*. For although it be very plain, that the longer any man lives, the more *ordinarily* he understands and improves in Knowledge; yet if most of us were asked how much we are wiser *now* than we were a *Month* or *two Months* since, it might often puzzle us to answer it, and, though it be plain we are *improved*, to *particularize in what*, as well as it is to *particularize our improvements by the Sacrament*. So that not only those good men, whose growth is apparent; but also several others, who have not particu-

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larly discovered it, are bettered in Communicating, by an *improvement of those Graces which they brought along to it.*

But if any Good men are not better'd in the Sacrament, by *improving*, yet are they all,

2. By *continuing in their Goodness, which they must ascribe to it, and for which it is most richly worth their pains to frequent it.*

It is one great Grace and Benefit to all Good men, that they can maintain their present station in Goodness, and not Relapse, and fall back into their former sins again. Their *Natural Lusts* are only kept under, not quite *extinguish'd* in them, and will grow bold, and strive for Mastery upon any fair occasion. And they are daily in the way of *manifold Temptations*, which awaken them, and give more strength and advantage to them. And they are many times either *wearied out with watchings*, or *lull'd asleep in secure carelessness*, which makes them lyable to become a prey to them. They are closely beset with powerful Enemies, and much in danger'd by continual Temptations, and oft-times unguarded and fit to make but a very weak Defence; which are things that would hinder them from *standing* where they are, as well as from *improving* and going farther. So that it is a  
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very great benefit, and they are much the better by it, if any thing can help them to keep what Grace they have got already, as well as inable them to gain more. This *continuance* in Goodness, is less, indeed, than *Improvement*; but yet it is a most valuable thing, and of so great account, that, were there nothing more to be had by it, for its sake alone it were most richly worth any man's while to come to the Holy Sacrament.

And this Benefit, which all Good men hold, since they would cease to be good, should they fall from it, all *worthy Receivers* ought to ascribe as much to the *Communion*, as to any *other* thing. They owe it not to it *alone*, indeed, but to *other* means also, *viz.* to *hearing* and *reading the Word*, and *meditating* upon it, which puts them in mind of their Duty, and of the great motives to it; to *Self-examination*, which shews them their Falls and Deviations from it; to *solemn Vows* and *Promises*, which bind them to be careful in it; and to *servent faithful Prayers*, which bring down God's Grace and Spirit that inables them to perform it. All *these*, and *others*, are great means of securing their standing in an Holy Course, amidst all their Temptations to depart from it; and therefore to every one of them they

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must in part ascribe it. But the Sacrament contributes to it as much, at least, if not more than any thing besides; so that in accounting whence they receive this great benefit, it ought not in any wise to be excluded. For therein they *remember* and *fix in mind the death of Christ*, which is the highest *motive* to it; and exercise that *Faith*, and *Love*, and *Thankfulness*, and *Resignation*, and *Repentance*, vvhich are the best *means* to set it forvvard; and make God *solemn Vows* and *Promises*, vvhich are the straitest *bond* to ingage them to it; and put up many *feruent Prayers*, vvhich are the best course to *make way* for it; and receive those *inward Graces* and *Assistances*, as I have shewvn, vvhich *inable* them to discharge it. So that vvhen vvorthy Communicants continue after the Sacrament to hold their present pitch of Goodness, and do not slide back again into their former sins; they must not say they are no better by it, for this benefit of *standing in a good state*, they receive from it. Though it doth not improve and bring them *forward*, yet it helps mightily to continue and keep them vvhere they *are*.

Thus are all good People really bettered by the Sacrament. For, besides the *Peace of Conscience*, vvhich is thereby much

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much settled in those Penitents, vvho understand and consider, that therein they have seal'd the Covenant of Pardon vvith Almighty God: Besides this effect, I say, in those vvho rightly understand it; the *Graces of some are much improved*, and the *standing of all is greatly maintain'd* by it, vvhich last, vvhere there no other expectation from it, is a most valuable benefit, and such, vvherefore it is highly vvorth any mans labour to frequent it.

3. *Where they are not bettered at all by the Sacrament, or not so much as might be expected, that is purely through their own Fault, and they must amend it.*

*Where they are not bettered at all by the Sacrament, I say, or not so much as might be expected, that is purely through their own Fault.* If they examine their ovvn hearts about it, they vvill find that they have been vvanting in those things, vvhich should have made it a lively means and help to their improvement. It may be, after they have felt in their ovvn Souls that they have *renounced all evil ways*, vvhich might fit them for it; they do not yet perceive any *affecting peace of mind*, and comfortable sense of the Love of God to be vvrought by it. But then that is because they do not *consider*, hovv therein they confirmed a *League of Love*, and



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received assurance of his Favour to the Penitent. Perhaps they are not *improved* in an *Holy Life*, nor prevail more against their Sins, after they have joyn'd in it; but then that is because they are *wanting* in those things, which are necessary to such Improvement. They did not *enquire what their particular sins* were, and *deliberately resolve* against them *before* they came to it; nor are careful to *bear in mind* what they have promised, and to *watch the opportunity of performing it*, after they have been at it. Had these things been done, and this care been shewn, both *before* and *after* it; they may be assured, as I have shewn, both from the *virtue of God's Promise*, and the *Nature of the thing*; that they would have been the better by it. But when these means are not used, but omitted, they cannot expect it should have its effect in making them obedient. For the Sacrament helps us to grow in Grace and Goodness, as a *moral means*, which works only in *concurrence with our own care*, but not *without* it. It makes us *leave our sins*, by *engaging us to examine* after them, and *particularly to resolve* against them, and to *strive*, as the opportunities come, to get quit of them; and by bringing down such *gracious Assistances* to us, as will serve  
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our turn when we *endeavour* with them. But if we will be wanting to our selves in these *Self-examinations*, and *particular Resolutions*, and *after-care* and *good endeavours*; then can it do us no good, because we will not suffer it: and therefore, as we were before, so we shall continue, the same unreformed, and unimproved Persons still.

Thus is the want of being better'd by the Sacrament, either *at all*, or *so much* as might be expected, altogether our *own Fault*. Namely, because we come not to it with that *particular sight* and *consideration* of *all our sins*, and *resolution* against them, nor are afterwards so *mindful* of it, and shew that *care* to perform what we have *resolv'd*, which is necessary to our *amendment*; nor have that *consideration* of its being a *sealing* of the *Covenant of Peace* and *Reconciliation*, which is as necessary to our *Comfort* and *Peace of mind* from it. So that whensoever we fail of that benefit which should accrue by it, it is purely through our own Neglect, and we must thank our selves for it.

And since this want of being better'd, is wholly our *own Fault*, let all those who are kept back by it, take care to *amend* that, and then this objection is answer'd. When they receive no benefit from the Sacra-

ment, they themselves are to be blamed for omitting those things, which are necessary to make it benefit them; and if they will take care to use them the next time, they will be benefited by it. So that this hindrance lasts no longer than they are pleas'd it should, and when they will, need be no hindrance to them at all.

As for those then, that urge this for their not coming to the Sacrament, viz. *Their not being better'd or improved by it*: My Answer to them in *sum* is this. If there be any force in it, it will hold much stronger for their not coming to *Prayers*, or the *Publick Assemblies*, and ought not so much to hinder them from *this Feast*, as from all other parts of *Worship*. But, in indeed, it is no just hindrance, nor is there any sufficient excuse at all from it. Where 'tis *true*, there is no *fair excuse* in it; because we are not only bound in *Interest*, but in *strict Duty* also to Communicate. But in the case of all *good men* 'tis *false*, for they are really the *better* by the Sacrament, tho' perhaps they do not *think*, or *understand* they are so. For it either *improves them in their Goodness*; as 'tis highly fit it should and will do all, who are not wanting to themselves: or at least it *continues* them in it, which, where there is nothing more, is of it self most richly worth all the

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the pains they bestow upon it. And where they are not better'd at all, or not so much as might be expected; that is purely their *own Fault*, and will hinder them no longer than they have a mind to it; for when they please they may amend it. If they are *good* men, they are *better* by the Sacrament; and if they are *ill*, their being no better doth not *excuse* their *Neglect* of it; and they may be bettered the *next* time, if they will take that *care* which is necessary to it: so that this ought not in any wise to be an Hindrance, and keep them from it.

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C H A P.

## C H A P. III.

*Of want of Charity.*

## The Contents.

A Sixth Hindrance is, a Fear lest they want that Charity, particularly towards Enemies, and those who have given them Provocations, which is required to it. An account what Love is, and what is not due to such Persons. 1. We are bound to shew them all the offices of general Charity, which are due to our Neighbour at large, or to all others. This Love contains in it all the particular Offices of Justice, Charity and Peace, which are due to all mankind. It is transgressed by all the opposite Instances, but by nothing more than hard and uncandid Censures and Suspicions. The commonness, and sinfulness of this Carriage. The want of this Charity unfits men for this Feast; but so it doth for Prayers, and all other Religious Worship. 2. We are not bound to shew them all the Offices of special Esteem, Trust and Confidence, which are not fit to be placed on all men, but on such only as are qualified

qualified for them. When they sufficiently shew Repentance of their Fault, they are to be re-admitted to the same state of Favour and Friendship. We must be candid in judging when their Repentance is sufficiently evidenced. An humble Confession is ordinarily a sufficient Proof of it for the first Fault; but not when it has been oft repeated, *LUC. 17. 4.* which seems to affirm it, answer'd. Several Cases clear'd, which are sometimes thought by Pious Souls to be a breach of Charity towards Enemies, but in reality are not. As, not forgetting Injuries or Unkindnesses, but still retaining a Remembrance of them. Thinking the worse of those who offered them. Being troubled at the sight of them, as that puts them in mind of the great Losses they have sustain'd by them. Shewing more reserve, and carrying a greater distance in Conversing with them, than with other men. These are no breach of Charity towards them, nor can be a just Hindrance from the Communion.

**A** Sixth Hindrance, which keeps back several from this Feast, is, their fear lest they want that Charity which is required to it. They have some profest Enemies, that own hatred and a mischievous inclina-

inclination in all their Carriage ; or some false *Friends* and *Confidents*, who, though not out of *Malice*, yet to serve a *particular turn* or *interest*, have proved very unfaithful or injurious ; or some *imprudent* and *unwise Dependants*, who, when they meant well, perhaps, have done things very disadvantageous and displeasing to them in their business. From the *Malice of some*, or the *Falseness of others*, or the *Folly of a third sort*, they have received those Provocations, which they cannot yet cast out of their minds ; and when they remember them, they feel their hearts are much estranged from those who offered them ; and whilst they are so, they fear they love them not as they ought, nor have that Charity towards Enemies and injurious Persons, which God requires in all Communicants.

And this want of Charity for Enemies and offensive Persons is urged, not only by those, who either *do*, or *wish* ill to them, who, indeed, have just cause to say they want it : But also by others, who incur neither of them, and therefore have no sufficient cause at all for it. For many Good People, who requite no injuries to those who have provoked them, but shew them all those instances of *Justice*,

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*Justice, Charity, and Peace, which God requires of us towards all men, and which are all that is due to them: Are yet afraid that they have not so much Charity for them as the Law enjoins, because they still remember their Injuries or Unkindnesses, or think the worse of their Persons, or keep a greater distance from them in their Carriage, or forbear to use them, as formerly they did, in the quality of particular Friends and Confidants, or withhold some other special Favours, which are not due to them, nor are any breach at all of that Charity, which they ought to have for them.*

This is great cause of *Scruple* to many honest minds, who are really troubled with it: And particularly it is a most common *hindrance* from the Holy Sacrament; there being no Duty, I think, which the generality of men believe, more indispensably required, than *Peace* and *Charity* in every worthy Communicant. And therefore that they who *want* this Love of Enemies, which unfits them for this Feast, may quickly set about the attainment of it; and that they who *have* it, may not be troubled, or held back from receiving, as if they had it not; I shall here endeavour to give a plain state of it, and shew, both *what is*, and *what*



is not imply'd in it. And this I shall do in these two particulars.

1. *We are bound to shew our Enemies, and any others who have provoked us, all the Offices of general Charity, or all that Love which is due to our Neighbour at large, and to all other Persons.* So that whilst we allow our selves in the breach of this, we are unfit for this Feast, and must instantly amend, that we may be fitted for it.

But,

2. *We are not bound to shew them all the Offices of special Esteem, Trust and Confidence, which are not fit to be placed on all men, but on such only as are qualified for them.* So that when we fail only in these, we are in no Fault, nor have any need to be troubled, or kept back by it.

1. I say, *We are bound to shew our Enemies, and any others, who, by their unkind, indiscreet, or injurious carriage, have provoked us, all the Offices of general Charity, or all that Love which is due to our Neighbour at large, and to all other Persons.* So that if we allow ourselves in the breach of it, we are unfit for this Feast, and must instantly amend, that we may be fitted for it.

*We are bound to shew them all the Offices of general Charity, or to treat them with all that Love which is due to our Neighbour at large, and to all other Persons.* How

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How hardly soever they might be treated either among *Jews* or *Gentiles*, yet in *Christianity* our *Enemies* are *Neighbours* and *Brethren*, and ought to share in all that Love, which God requires of us towards the promiscuous Multitude of other men. For it takes of all that *hatred* and *spiteful Resentment*, which would exclude them from all good Offices; and sets them in the Rank of *Neighbours*, whom God commands us to treat with all those instances of Kindness, wherein consists the *loving our Neighbour as ourselves*. This is plain, for its not permitting us to *hate*, as the *Jewish Law* did, but strictly enjoyning us to *Love our Enemies*, Mat. 5. 44, 45. For where *Love* is, it naturally issues out in all these Duties as there is occasion for them; upon which account it is call'd *the fulfilling of the Law*, i. e. of that part of it which concerns us towards men, because *working no ill*, as St. Paul says, *to our Neighbour*, it leads us into all of them, Rom. 13. 9, 10. Besides, that our *Enemies* are to share in all that Love which is due to our *Neighbours*, our Saviour plainly declares, when he singles out a most *bitter Enemy*, and sets him forth as the *Neighbour* whom the Law mentions, making the *Samaritane* a *Neighbour*, even to a *Jewish* man, between

tween whom there was the most inveterate, and inbred Enmity and Opposition. For when the *Lawyer* asked him, *Who is my Neighbour?* he tells him by the *Parable* of a *Jewish man*, who being left wounded by the *Thieves*, found a *Neighbour* of the good *Samaritane*, that 'tis any one he meets withall, though a *Stranger*, though an *Enemy*, yea, though of a *Party* and *Profession* in *Religion* most odious unto his, which ordinarily causes the highest and most implacable Enmities, as it did between the *Jews* and *Samaritanes*, who stood at so great a distance, as that they would not give or ask so much as a

† Joh. 4. 9.

† *Cup of Water* of each other, or have any sort

of intercourse together. This was his *Neighbour*, says he, and so must thou be in a like Case, go, and do so likewise, Luc. 10. v. 29, to 38.

Thus are all we *Christians* bound to hold our *Enemies*, and those who have provoked us, in the same promiscuous Rank with all others; and notwithstanding all their unkindnesses, or injurious Carriage, to look upon them as our *Neighbours*, whom we are to Love as we do ourselves.

And that Love contains in it all the particular Offices of *Justice*, *Charity* and  
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Peace, which we owe to *Mankind at large*, even to all Persons.

1. It contains in it all the Duties of *Justice*; as namely, that we be *true* to them in all our *Speeches*, and *faithful* in all our *Promises*, and *just* and *equal* in all our *Dealings*, never *seizing*, *hurting*, or *detaining* any thing which belongs to them; nor any ways *perverting*, *obstructing*, or *infringing* any Right, because 'tis theirs.

All the Duties of *Charity*, as that we honour them for their *Virtues*, and pity them in their *Miseries*, and relieve them in their *Wants*; and, when they will take it, not *passionately* and *publicly* (which shews not any *Love* of them, but our *Wrath* and spleen against them) but with great *Privacy* and *Friendship*, reprove them for their *Faults*, and *Congratulate* with them in their *Joys*, and conceal their *Defects*, and vindicate their *injured Reputations*, and be *Courteous* and *Condescensive*, *Meek* and *Gentle* in our *Carriage*, *Candid* in putting a good Interpretation upon all their *Words* and *Actions*, especially such as relate to our *own selves*, *placable* or *easie* to be intreated after any *Offences*, and apt to *forgive* and *requite* them with *soft Speech*, *fair Carriage*, *good Offices*, and the like.

3. All

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3. All the Duties of *Peace*, in maintaining *Unity* and *Quietness*, and avoiding all *Strife* and *Variance*, *Clamour* and *Brawling* with them, as with all Mankind.

† Meas. of Christ.  
Obed. B. 2.

All these, as I have  
† elsewhere particularly shewn, are such Duties, as we owe to our *Neighbour at large*, and to *all men*: And then to our *Enemies* among them, since in Christianity they are *Brethren* and *Neighbours* too, and have a claim to them. And these, *Love* and *Brotherly kindness*, when once it is seated in us, will be sure to effect and make us pay them. For he that Loveth another, as St. Paul saith, hath fulfill'd the Law. Because this, Thou shalt not commit *Adultery*; Thou shalt not Kill; Thou shalt not Steal; Thou shalt not bear false Witness; Thou shalt not Covet: And if their be any other Commandment, i.e. respecting others, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thy self. Love works no ill to his Neighbour, therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10.

And since we are bound to Love our *Enemies*, in paying them all this *Justice*, *Charity* and *Peace*, which I have mentioned as due to *all Persons*: 'Tis plain that

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we fail of it, whensoever we act against it in any of these *Particulars*.

1. We fail of it, if at any time we do any *wrong*, or shew any acts of *Injustice* towards them. As if we *falsify* and *lye* to them, or *break* our *Faith* and *Promise* with them, or *raise Calumnies*, or report *false* and *slandorous Stories* of them, or *bear false witness* against them, or *wrongfully with-hold* what is due to them, or *oppress*, *cozen*, or *defraud* them, or *take away* their *Lives*, or *maim* their *Bodies*, by *Secret Arts*, or *open Fight*, or *Assassination*, or the like.

2. We fail of it, if in any instance we are *uncharitable*, or *break the Peace* with them. As when we *envy* and *repine* at their *good*, or *rejoyce* at their *hurt*, or, when we could wipe them off, *suffer false stains* to *stick* upon them without any *Vindication*, or *speak* all the *ill* we know of them, and *backbite* and *revile* them, especially if we do it with *Aggravation*, *Triumph*, and *Scorn*, when any fall of theirs has given us an occasion, or *openly upbraid* them with our *kindnesses*, or *reproach* them *vwith* their *own sins*, or *mock* and *deride* them with their *Infirmities*, or *as-front* them in our *Carriage*, or are *Passionate*, and *burst out* into *bitterness* and *brawling*,

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*brawling, strife and debate upon any provocation, or are unthankfully forgetful of their former favours, or implacable after their injuries, or thirst after revenge, and are hasty to punish, or rigorous in exactions, or such like.*

All *these* are a Breach of that Love and Duty, which we ought to bear towards our Enemies in common with all other persons, as might be proved, were there any need of it, of *every one* of the particulars. And by reason they have deserv'd ill of us, and given us great provocations; unless we are very circumspect, and keep a strict Guard upon ourselves, in all our Discourses and Carriage towards them, we shall be in great danger to incur them more or less.

But among all the instances of uncharitableness to our Enemies, there is none whereto we are more obnoxious, and against which we ought to watch with greater carefulness, as we tender the safety of our own Souls, than *hard Censures and Suspicions, or fancying the worst Designs, and putting the worst Interpretations upon all their words and actions, when they come before us.*

This, God knows, is a most general and reigning sin among all *Adversaries*, and is daily seen, not only among the *noto-*  
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*riously ill and irreligious*, but also among those, who are otherwise very *sober and devoutly serious*. For even the generality of men, when the Actions of their Enemies come to be scann'd before them, are very apt to turn them into an ill sense, and to make the most of them to their prejudice, and judge of them, not as indifferent and unconcern'd persons, but as they who desire to find Faults, and to pick out something which they may accuse in them.

And this has been every where done, not only against *particular persons*, but, on all hands, against *whole Bodies and Parties of Men*, who, in any thing relating to the Times, are of different Perswasions, and either *think or act* not after their *Projects and Opinions*. For how apt have, not only *private men* been in the case of particular quarrels; but many also in the heat, and at the top of *all Parties*, in the judging of their opposites to mistrust *ill Designs* even in their *good Actions*, and to impute all their ill to *unmixt malice*, without making any allowances of *forgetfulness, over-sight, impetuous heat*, or other humane Frailties; to take every thing by the *wrong handle*, and where it *might*, and *would* bear a *good*, were there any Love to construe it, to  
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fix upon it an *ill* Sense, and to interpret it to their disadvantage. In arguing upon all their words and actions, they suck'd out nothing but the venome, and turn'd every thing into a sore about them, and were strangely rash in bestowing *opprobrious* and *ill* Names upon them, and laid about them at that rate, as if they fancied they could not exceed, either in *thinking*, or in *speaking* evil of them. In all which, instead of being check'd with any Remorse for it, their *Consciences* rather countenanced and encourag'd it. For since, as they apprehended, the cause they contended for was good in their *own Party*, and bad in the *Party* that *opposed* it: This Carriage they call'd not *wrath* and *spite*, but *Zeal*, and thought accordingly that God would own and accept it.

But this is a very *sinful* and *unchristian* Carriage. It is utterly contrary to the *Love of Enemies*; for Love is always inclinable to think the best, and leans, so far as the thing will bear, to the side of Favour, both in *judging* and *speaking* of all their Actions. It is plainly contrary to our *Lord's Rule*, who warns us *not to judge, that we be not judged, i. e.* not to be forward in passing Sentence against others, that God may not pass Sentence against

against us ; for with what *measure we mete* in judging of their Actions, *he will mete out to us again*, Mat. 7. 1, 2. It is a direct Breach of that *Charity* which St. Paul describes, and makes of absolute necessity to our immortal happiness. For *Charity*, says he, *thinks or surmises no evil*, it *believes all things*, so far as in any reason it may, to other mens advantage. And without this *Charity*, though we have the spiritliest Zeal for the best Parties, nay, though we give our Bodies to be burned as Martyrs, it profits us nothing, i. e. towards God's acceptance, 1 Cor. 13. 3, 5, 7. Since it is a Zeal which is not peaceable as well as pure, since it is not full of *Mercy* and *Fruits*, but issues out in a bitter and *invenom'd* Spirit, which turns all things to the worst, and is bent in all points to the hurt of those who fall under it: 'Tis plain it can never come from God, who, being *Mercy* and *Love* it self, can never be the Author of so much Cruelty and Hatred ; but must be ascribed to our own Lusts, and the *infernal Spirits*, as the true Parents and Abettors of it. And this St. James expressly says of that bitter Zeal, which takes not a tender heart, and bowels of *Love* or *Charity* along with it. If it were that *from above*, saith he, it would first indeed be pure, but then it would

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would next be *peaceable, gentle, easie to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits.* If God kindled it, since he is Love itself, and requires us to Love our Enemies as ourselves, these Fruits of Love and Mercy would be sure to accompany it. But if all these are shut out, and it dwells in an hurtful and imbitter'd Spirit ; if

† Πικρὸν ζῆλον.

that be a *bitter envying* or † *Zeal that dwells in your Hearts*, then, adds he, *glory not in it ; for this descends not from above, so as to have God for the Author of it, but is sensual, i. e. arising from our own Passions, nay, Devilish, being set on by the malicious Agency of Infernal Spirits, Jam. 3. 14, 15, 16, 17.*

And thus it appears when really we are out of Charity with any persons who have provoked us, and fall short of that Love of Enemies, which God's Law requires of us. For when we Love them not as we ought, when we are any ways *unjust* to them, or apt upon every little occasion to *strive* and *contend* with them, or deal *uncharitably* by them in any Conversation, particularly in *malicious Surmizes* and *Suspitions*, and *uncandid Censures*, which are so general in *all*, but more abundant in *our Times*, when the *Nation* is divided into *Parties*, and men

seem

seem to have forgot that there is *any Religion towards Enemies*, or any Love due to them, who has given them personal Provocations, or side with a Party opposite to what they espouse.

And if upon a survey of our Carriage in these particulars, we find this to be our Case, and that we are thus out of Charity, and have not forgiven any who have provoked us: 'Tis very true, whilst that lasts we are *unfit for the Sacrament*, since he that worthily joyns in it, must come in *Love*, and have freely forgiven all the World. But then we are also equally unfit to *pray*, or 'ask the *forgiveness of our own sins* at Gods hands; since, if we pray in *Wrath* and *Enmity*, he will not hear us. Nay, this *not forgiving others*, turns all our own Prayers into a *Curse*, and makes them a dreadful and downright *Imprecation* against our selves. For when we say this Prayer-----*forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*, with *malice* in our Hearts: The plain *English* of it is, that God would *revenge our Trespasses* on our heads, as we are ready to *revenge their Trespasses* on theirs: Which is so bold, and Fool-hardy an Address, as no man, I presume, will put up to God, who considers what he says.

When really we are out of Charity  
O therefore,

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therefore, and have not forgiven others; we are not only unfit to Communicate, but to the full as unfit to make any Prayers, or place any hope in Almighty God. And when once he is sensible that this is his State, there is no wise man will continue in it, but will forthwith resolve to lay aside all his Resentments, and get out of it.

This he may find *difficult*, indeed, when he sets about it; but it is *absolutely necessary* to be done, and unless he would incur the Wrath of God, and the Eternal pains of Hell, which are ten thousand times *more* difficult, he must go through with it. But if he considers how much he himself needs to be forgiven, and how he has infinitely more provoked God, than his Brother has provoked him; he will find it no very hard matter to forgive him for *Christs* sake, though it might be hard to do it for his *own*. And besides, if he will not dwell upon the injuries or unkindnesses which are so provoking, but *cast them out* so soon as he perceives they are enter'd into his mind; it will yet be much easier to him. He cannot *quite* forget them, it may be, so as that he shall never think of them: But when without his leave they start up in his thoughts, he can chuse  
whether

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whether he will *harbour* and give way to them. And if he will be careful to do that, the great difficulty of Forgiveness is removed. For it is our dwelling upon an injury received, and hearkening to ill suggestions that *aggravate* the deed, and the *malice* or *unworthiness* of him that offered it, which heightens our Resentment of it to that degree, that we have much ado before we can bring ourselves to be reconciled. So that if we would not harbour and entertain the thoughts of it, the forgiveness of an injury would have much more ease in it. And this Remedy St. Paul prescribes, to prevent all *Wrath and Revengeful Carriage*. *Let not the Sun go down upon your Wrath, neither give place to the Devil, or*

to a \* Calumniator and \* Τῷ Διαβόλῳ.

Accuser, *i. e.* to exasperating Thoughts and Insinuations, whether suggested to us by our own minds, or by the whisperings of others, *Eph. 4. 26. 27.*

And thus having proved that we are bound to shew our *Enemies*, and those who have provoked us, *all the Offices of general Charity*, or all that Love which is due to our *Neighbour at large*, and to *all other Persons*; so that whilst we allow our selves in the breach of them, we are unfit for

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this Feast, and must instantly amend, that we may be fitted for it. I proceed now,

2. To shew that we are not bound to shew them all the Offices of special esteem, trust and confidence, which are not fit to be placed on all men, but on such only, as are qualified for them: So that when we fail only in these, we are in no fault, nor have any need to be troubled, or kept back by it.

We are not bound to make an Enemy a familiar Companion, or a particular Friend a Partner of our Secrets, a Sharer of our Trust; or an Officer in our Business; but may be more afraid of him, and keep more at a distance from him, and use more Caution and Reserve in conversing with him, than with other men. As for all the instances of general Charity, indeed, they are due upon a Reason which is common to our Enemies with others, *i. e.* their being Men and Christians: So that they ought to share in them, and we fail of our Duty to them, when at any time we withhold them from them. But as for these marks of special esteem and confidence; they are founded on particular reasons and fitness of Persons, as likeness of humour, Fidelity of Affection, aptness for our affairs, or the like: So that in them we are not bound to our Enemies, who are plainly unfit through their pro-  
fest

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fest Enmity, or treacherous Falseness; nay,  
nor to any one among others: But are left  
at Liberty to make such choice, as shall  
seem best to our own Prudence. This Liber-  
ty must in all Equity and Reason be allow-  
ed us, because upon a right choice of  
these Persons the innocence, ease and  
safety of our Lives most nearly depends;  
and without being left to discretion in it,  
we must unavoidably throw our selves in-  
to inextricable Snares, and numberless  
Calamities. And that it is allowed, our  
Saviour clearly intimates, when he re-  
commends to us the wisdom of Serpents,  
bidding us shew all the prudence we can  
devise, so long as no unrighteousness  
mixes with it, but it is wholly guided by  
the Doves innocence, Mat. 10. 16. And in  
this he has gone before us in his own Pra-  
ctise. For though he loved those who  
believed on him, Joh. 2. with all that Love  
which his Law requires, i. e. with a gene-  
ral Affection: Yet, as the Evangelist tells  
us, he did not trust, or commit himself to  
them, because he knew all men, v. 23, 24.

So long then as we requite no Injuries  
upon our Enemies, or others that have  
offended us, nor are wanting to them in  
any point of Justice, Charity or Peace,  
which is due to all Persons; we are not  
uncharitable to them, in thinking the worse



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of their persons, or *carrying* our selves towards them at a *greater distance*, or *forbearing* to use them, as formerly we did, in the quality of *particular Friends* and *Confidants*, or *withdrawing* some other *special Favours*, which their Fault has justly forfeited, and they have no more claim to.

Indeed, if afterwards they *Repent* of their Offence, which makes the breach between us, and amend that Fault which unfits them for our *Business*, or *Converse*; when only *we ourselves* are concerned, and the thing is not of that weight as that we may be *jealous* over it, and we have no other cause but that offence to exclude them from it, 'tis a Christian part, not only to retain them in a general Charity in common with all other Persons, but also to re-admit them to the *same State*, which formerly they held vvith us.

When the concern is not purely *our own*, but we are set to secure *higher*, and more *publick Ends*; there, 'tis true, we are not bound presently to re-admit to the same state upon Repentance. And thus it is in the point of *Discipline*, wherein the Sin is not presently pardoned, so soon as the Criminal has Repented of it: But the punishment is oft-times continued, (as it was in the *lasting Excommunications* of the *Primitive Christians*)

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*Christians*) that the durableness of the smart may both more *terrifie others* from it, and *amend themselves* by begetting a more lasting memory and abhorrence of it. And thus 'tis too in point of *Publick Trust*, when we act not for ourselves, but pursuant to our care of others: For there we may lay aside *Penitents*, because they have once sinn'd, thinking there is more safety in those who have still stood firm, and been always innocent. And thus *St. Paul* did with *Mark*, who had † once † *Act. 13. 13.* declined the toil and peril of *Converting the Gentile World*. For after he had freely forgiven it, yet, says *St. Luke*, in the dispute betwixt *Barnabas* and him, *he thought not good to take him for a Companion*, because he once deserted them, and *went not with them to the work*; but preferred *Silas*, who had never flinch'd from it, *Act. 15. 37, 38, 40.*

But when only we *ourselves* are concerned; and the thing is not of that weight as that we may be *jealous* over it, (in which case, indeed, a greater Caution is requisite;) and we have *no other Cause* but *that Offence* to exclude them from it: (For if upon other accounts the choice at first was ill made, and either already *is*, or *may* be altered to our Benefit, since

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the fixing on any man for a Friend or Dependant is not a necessary Duty, but a discretionary free thing, we are not blame-worthy in correcting it: ) When the Case, I say, is thus, 'tis a *Christian* act to admit returning *Penitents* to the *same* state they held before they offended us. For when once they have Repented of a Fault, they are as fit for our *Affairs* or *Friendships*, as they were before they committed it. So that if any marks of our displeasure remain still after that, which in the present state of things might conveniently enough be altered, it is not *their unfitness*, but *our Resentment* which is the cause of it. And when we go so to *ease* our offended minds by their *loss*, this looks not like *forgiving a Trespas*, but *revenging* it. And this Re-admission to their former state is according to *St. Paul's* Direction, *Col. 3. 13. to forgive others, even as Christ forgives us*; for he admits *Penitents* to the state of innocent Persons, pardoning without upbraiding, and quite

\* Heb. 8. 12. \* *forgetting*, as if the sin had never been done: And according to what he prescribes, *1 Cor. 14. 20. when he bids us in malice to be Children*; for after once they are made *Friends*, they forget all, and return to the

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the same degree of Love and Confidence again. The *wise Son of Sirach* says, indeed, that for *four things*, viz. *upbraiding, and Pride, and disclosing of Secrets, and a Treacherous wound, every Friend will depart*, and never more be reconciled, *Eccles. 22. 22.* But he speaks only of what *ordinarily is done*, or of what *might have been done among the Jews*; not of what *may now be done among us*, of whom God expects an higher forgiveness, after the manner of *Children*, and the example of *Christ Jesus*. So that when once they have sufficiently Repented, 'tis fit that we forgive them to as full purpose, as if they had never sinn'd at all.

And in judging of this Repentance, we ought not to be *strict* and *rigid* in standing upon exact proofs; but to be *candid*, and apt to interpret all signs of it to the best Sence, leaning to this side of Love and easie Admittance. If they take shame to themselves, and are so far humbled, as *penitently to confess* it: 'Tis a great Argument of their being set against it, and, in the case of the *first* offence especially, a strong Presumption that they will no more commit it. Although, when once these Confessions become *Customary*, and are still made and broke

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anew upon every fresh occasion: It is a sign only that they mean well, and *would* amend if they could; but no Presumption that they *will* do it, since their penitent Resolution plainly is too weak, and their Lusts prove still too strong for it. And since these Confessions are manifestly an incompetent proof of their having thorowly Repented; we cannot be bound to believe them, or obliged thereupon to a return of Friendship.

Our Saviour, indeed, tells us, that *If our Brother Trespass against us seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again, saying, I Repent; we must forgive him, Luc. 17. 4.* And here, if by *forgiving*, were meant *restoring to the same state of Favour and Affection*; this would infer his Profession of Repentance, tho' never so often broke, to be a sufficient Demonstration of it, and a just Ground of his return to Friendship. But this, I suppose, speaks only of such forgiveness, as admits him, not to the *same* state which before he held with us, but only to the state of a *Neighbour at large*, or of all other Persons. And albeit this is due to him, whether he say, *I Repent*, or no; yet doth our Saviour here enjoin it upon his Repentance, not because the *thing* required it, but that he might more directly

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rectly oppose the *Jewish Doctrine* in this point, which was too scanty in forgiving even a *returning Penitent*. For this they limited to a small number of times, it being a received Rule among the *Rabbins*, that \* *after he has forgiven any Person thrice, he has gone as far as he needs and that no man is bound to forgive the fourth offence.*

\* Dr. Lightf.  
Hor. Heb. in  
loc. è Jom.

To forgive an injury then so far as not to return it, nor to be wanting in any Neighbourly office toward him that offered it, is a plain Duty, upon his saying he Repents of it: Yea, as have been shewn, whether he Repents or not. But to the evidencing of such Repentance as would oblige us to confide in him again, and leaves *no imputation of unfitness in him*, but only our *Resentment* for a reason of our distance from him; we may require more than his *saying he Repents*, and giving us his bare word and promise, after they have several times deceived us. For no *wise man* would trust to that which is oftner wrong than right, as every such Person's word is, who hitherto has always failed in it: And Christianity in no case forbids us to be *wise in our own Concerns*, but directs us to be *as subtle as Serpents*, so long as we are careful withal to keep  
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as *innocent as Doves*, Mat. 10. 16. It commends us for being *prudent* in business, and seeing before-hand to prevent *other mens sins*, by cutting off from them all opportunities; and it may be *our own* too, by putting by those Temptations, which would *always* trouble and molest our *Peace*, and *often-times* indanger our *innocence*. So that although we are to be *very favourable* in construing the sufficiency of our Enemies Repentance; yet may we be *discreet* withal, and are not to be *foolishly blind*, and unreasonably easie in approving it. We must only lean to the side of Favour, when there are such signs, as to a Wise man look towards it, but not rashly conclude on it, when there are no likely signs at all of it. But the fault of men seldom lies on this side, of being *over-easie to be fully reconciled*; so that the other, of being *over-rigid*, is that which the generality of men ought to guard themselves against. And therefore in judging of the sufficiency of their Repentance, this is the great Rule we are to take along with us, viz. That *as* it is *one* part of Charity *fully to forgive our offending Brother*, and re-admit him to our former favour, on his *Repentance*, so 'tis *another* to be *favourable* in judging whether he has *sufficiently Repented*, and given such proofs

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proofs of it as ought to be believed, or no.

As for these farther effects of Love towards Enemies, and those who have provoked us then, *viz. our not barely retaining them in a general Charity and Affection, as we do all other men, but re-admitting them to special Trust, Familiarity and Friendship, which they had in their former Station;* they are not always *due* to them, nor are at all *proper* to be placed on them, but only when they *Repent and Amend* those Faults, which made them *unfit* for them. So that whilst their *Impenitence* lasts, or that change doth not *sufficiently* appear to us, we are not obliged to express our Love in these at all.

And since we are not bound to them, nor are guilty of any Sin in omitting them; that omission can never unfit us for the *Holy Communion*. So that whilst we shew them all the offices of *general kindness*, and are wanting in nothing but *special Favours*, which belong not to them in their present Circumstances; we have all the Charity for them which our Lord requires, and therefore, if we have nothing else to hinder us, may readily join in this Feast of Love when God invites us to it.

And this might serve for a sufficient Answer, to those *supposed* Instances of *unchari-*



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*charitableness* mentioned above, which hinder several *fit* and *worthy* Persons from partaking in this Ordinance. But for their *fuller* satisfaction in these points, I will add something concerning each of the *Particulars*.

1. They fear they have not that Charity for *Enemies* and *offensive* Persons, which God's Law requires, because they cannot forget aswell as forgive, but still remember their injuries, or unkindnesses.

But did not our Saviour himself, that perfect pattern of Forgiveness, remember \* Peter's Denial of him after he had bitterly Repented of

it? Did he not sufficiently hint it to him, by questioning him *three times* about his Love of him, answerable to his having *three times denied him*; that by calling it over upon his Remembrance, he might encrease his care and watchfulness against it afterwards? So that 'tis not the bare Remembrance, but remembering them to *evil purposes*, which is to be blamed in us. When they bare in mind the ill they have received, then let them consider whether they do it to an ill effect. Do they think of it to *upbraid them with it*, or to do them a *shame for it*, and sit as *Spyes* upon their Actions only that they may find  
Faults,

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*Faults, and aggravate Miscarriages, or to return the ill to them again in transgressing any of those Instances of common Justice or Charity above recited? If their Remembrance of it doth not provoke them into any of these sinful expressions of hatred, and ill will against them, they need not be troubled at it, for there is no hurt done by it. It is not in their Power, it may be, perfectly to forget it; for when the knowledge of things is once fix'd in our minds, though we can forbear to reflect on it, wherein lies the great danger of it, yet can we not lose it when we have a mind to it. So that after we have received an injury, we are not to be blamed barely for remembering it; since we are no more able always wholly to forget what has past, than we were at first to be wholly ignorant and insensible of it. Nay, in many Cases, if we could, it is not advisable that we should do it. For whilst the injurious Person is Impenitent, and ready to repeat the same again, the Remembrance of it will do us good, in quickning our care, and making us more wary and watchful to prevent it. But if once he has Repented of what he did, so as that he ought to be admitted to his former state; then, indeed, it may seem very desirable, that as much as in us lies,*

*we*

we should *forget* it, by giving no entertainment or encouragement to the Thoughts of it. For the Remembrance then can serve no good Ends, but may prove a very great snare to us, in making us *backward in kindness*, or *fit to catch fire on small Provocations*, or *uncandid in interpreting his words*, or *actions afterwards*. It will not be our *sin*, till these, or some other ill effects are wrought by it. But it will be our *Temptation*, whereby 'tis very like, we shall sometimes be much indanger'd. So that then it may be very fit to lay it aside, for fear of receiving hurt by it.

2. They fear that, after an *unkindness* or *injury* received, they are not so *Charitable* as they ought, because *they think the worse of him that offered it*.

Now if they are *uncandid in judging of the injurious action*, *i. e.* if they impute it to the worst cause, and make not those Allowances of *forgetfulness*, *over-sight*, and the like, which it would well admit, and which Love would fix upon it, were it to construe it: 'Tis true, they are so far wanting in it. This, indeed, is hard for us always to avoid, and therefore we must be sure to take the more care, and keep the stricter watch against it. And if after all, through *unwariness*, through

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*an Accusers laying out only the interpretations of the ill side, or our own suspicious temper insensibly leaning towards it, we are engaged in an uncandid Construction e'er we can discover it: There our inconsideration and unadvisedness will be our excuse for it. But so soon as ever we can observe it, or are shewn how the action is equally capable of a favourable Sense, we must strike in with it, and correct our hasty Judgment. So that if by thinking worse, they mean that they think worse than needs of the Action, and incur an uncandid interpretation; this is the Sentence they are to pass upon it. Either it was an innocently inconsiderate escape, and then their haste and unadvisedness will excuse it: Or it was a known sin, i. e. it either was, or, had they not been grossly partial, and evidently bent to think ill, would have been committed with observation; and then their Repentance and Amendment must atone for it.*

But if by *thinking worse*, they mean, that when the Fact is evidently ill, they have a *worse opinion of the Person*; there is no want of Charity in that, because they have just cause for it, and cannot in Reason think better of him. They judge only according to the plain Truth of things, and that the best Souls may safely

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safely do, and is no uncharitable part in any of them. For thus our Lord

thought of *Judas*, when  
 † Luc. 22. 48. he most effectinglly † suggested to him the baseness

of his *Betraying him*, and that too with a *Kiss*, the sign of Friendship and Affection.

And thus the *Apostles* thought of the *Jews*, whom they looked upon

\* Act. 2. 13. as \* wicked Murderers  
 & 7. 52. for our Saviour's Crucifixion. And thus St. Paul

thought of *Peter*, when he blamed him for his † sinful compliance

† Gal. 2. 11, and dissimulation. And thus  
 12, 13, 14. God himself thinks of us

upon our miscarriages, for he sees them, and dislikes us for them,

\* Luc. 6. 35. and thereby \* magnifies the Honour of his *Pati-*

*ente* and loving *Kindness*, in that he is good, even to the *unthankful* and the *evil*, and shews us Favour notwithstanding them.

And thus also may we very *innocently*, and *charitably* too think ill of any others,

when they have evidently deserv'd it, and given us just occasion for it. For the work of *Charity*, or Love to others, is

not to make us blind in a plain Case, and see no Faults in them when they are clear before us. For this is *Love without*

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Eyes, which is by no means the *Love of wise men*, or the *Charity of Christians*. It is not always possible in nature, nor could be shewn if we should attempt it. For, when other Faults are evident, there is no way of being dark against the Sun, or shutting out the Light whilst our Eyes are open. But if it always could be done, yet is it not in any wise proper to be advised. For if we must see no hurt in any Persons, it unavoidably destroys all wise choice of *Friends and Companions*, *Relations and Dependants*; all seasonable *Counsel and Instruction*, *Reproof and Admonition*; and so produces most sad effects, both in *Conversation and Religion*. The work of Charity to others then, is not to wink against a Fault when 'tis apparent; but not to be quick in discerning, and forward in presuming it, when there is no just Cause for it. So that if we would be Charitable to our Enemies, we must not believe ill of them, till it is sufficiently made out to us; nor conclude them faulty in a doubtful case, when there are Reasons on both sides, and they are as likely to be otherwise; nor presume they had an ill design in that, which lies as open to a good, and might have no hurt at all in it. In these cases, where their offence is not clearly proved, it is uncharitable-  
ness

ness in us to be hasty in believing it. But when their *Enmity* is *profest*, and their *Unkindness*, or *Injurious dealing* is *evident*; 'tis no Duty in any man to shut his Eyes against the Light, nor any uncharitableness at all to esteem them the less for it. We may think him a *Dishonest man*, that has *injured* us; and him a *False Friend*, that has *betrayed our Secrets* to our Prejudice, as our Saviour *Christ* did *Judas*; and that he is not so *kind* as he *professes*, who, when he might, refuses to *do good* to us. When we judge of Persons, not from *rash Surmises*, but from *clear Evidence* and *Experience*, we may judge as we find cause, and, if we judge ill of them, it is not because we are not inclined to it, but because they have deserved it; so that our ill Opinion is owing purely to their Faults, and not to any want of Charity in ourselves.

3. Some Persons of *Passionate Natures* fear they have not that Charity for Enemies, which is required of all good men, because, when some have been most mischievous to them, *their hearts are troubled*, and *they are inwardly moved as often as they see them*; not with any *Angry* or *Revengeful Passion*, which would do hurt to them, but only with a *sad Remembrance* of their *own Losses*, which they have sustained by them.

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Now where this is really the Case, (and they who are concerned must be faithful to their own Souls in judging whether it be or no) if there be any Fault in it, it is not *want of Charity towards them*, but *want of Patience towards God*, and *Contentment in their own Condition*. They shew no uncharitableness towards them in it, since they have no wrathful intent to seek their hurt, nor have the least desire to return the Injuries which they have suffer'd. They are troubled at the *sight of them*, indeed; but that is only as they put them in mind of their own Miseries, which they have occasion'd. They are grieved to see *them*, as they would be to see the *Picture of a Departed Friend*, whose Death went very near to them, *i. e.* only as it calls into their Thoughts that loss, which is very afflicting. And this *Grief*, whatever it may be with *Impatience*, is not chargeable with any *Uncharitableness* towards our Enemies. For it is no part of the Charity we owe them, to be insensible of what befalls ourselves, so that they cannot complain of us for lamenting our own miseries. Nor can they complain of us for doing it at their presence, because they being the cause of all, the sight of them may well bring it to our Remembrance:



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brance : And if we may be sorry at all for our own unhappiness, we may be allowed to grieve then especially, when we have those things before us, which are most apt to represent and suggest it to us.

So long then as they are careful so to *moderate* their Grief for what is lost, (and they must be watchful in this point) as that it doth not make them *distrust* God, nor *repine* at what he has order'd, nor settle into an *habitual Discontent*, nor is otherwise *sinful* or *intemperate* ; it need be no scruple to their minds, nor hinder them from the Holy Sacrament. They may endeavour to prevent it, both for their own *ease* and *safety*, that they may neither be *pain'd* nor *tempted* with it: And to this end it may be very advisable to avoid the *Presence of the injurious Person*, till they have so well digested their Loss, as that they can look on him without being troubled. But if at any time they meet, and their Hearts are sorrowful at the sight ; so long as this Grief is not in it self *sinful* or *intemperate*, nor has any angry motions and expressions of Revenge accompanying it, they need not be put into doubts and scruples with it, since their state is not disturb'd, nor their Souls at all endanger'd by it.

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4. They are afraid they have not such Charity for their Enemies as they ought, because *they are not so free with them, nor repose the same Trust in them*, but carry themselves with more Reserve, and at a greater distance from them, than they used to do before the breach betwixt them.

But so long as their Enemies are *Impenitent*, all this has no hurt in it: So that they ought not to be hindred from the Sacrament, or affrighted by it. For this wariness in Conversing with our Enemies, is no more than *Christ* himself shew'd in Conversing with the *Jews*; who would not walk openly among them, because they sought to kill him, Joh. 7. 1, & c. 11. 53, 54. It is no more than he taught his *Disciples* to use, when he sent them forth as *Sheep in the midst of Wolves*; for then he bid them take to themselves all the wary *Wisdom* and prudent *Care of Serpents*, Mat. 10. 16. Indeed, if any one that injures or offends us, expresses himself sorry for it, and sufficiently *Repents* of it; we ought, as I have shewn, to admit him to his former state, and to treat him, now he is a *Penitent*, as *God* doth us, or as *Children* do their *Play-Fellows*, i. e. as if he had never sinn'd, but had kept always

always innocent. But till we see that, we may very *lawfully*, and very *wisely* too, withdraw from him our *Particular Familiarity, Trust, or Friendship*. If we find a Person *Dishonest once*, till we see him a New man, we are not bound to trust him a *second time*; for that were to give him an opportunity of *committing*, and put us into the danger of *suffering the same* again from him. If 'tis his Temper to *fall foul* upon us in *Discourse*, or to be *passionate*, or *reproachful* upon light occasions; till it appears that he has learned to *Act* otherwise, we are not bound to use his Company and Acquaintance; for that were not only to throw away our own *ease*, but to endanger our own *Meekness, Peace, and other Virtues*, by *casting ourselves upon Temptations*; whereas we ought to be so far from seeking them

† Mat. 6. 13.

† taught to pray daily against those, which

God's Providence might allot for us. If he lays wait to *over-reach*, or is industrious to *vex*, or is any ways *uneasie*, or *prejudicial* to us in his Conversation, we may lawfully carry ourselves at a distance from him, till he has reformed those *Vices*, or corrected those

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those *ill Tempers* which harm or annoy us, and shew'd us that now with safety to our selves we may come nearer to him. This distance we may use towards any Persons that offend against us, out of a *Natural Love* and *Care* for our *own selves*; but if they are our *Children* or *Servants*, or any ways *Subject* and *Dependant* on us, there is still a more obliging Reason for it, and that is *their Amendment* and *Reformation* likewise. For when the Fault is great enough to bear it, these marks of our Displeasure are a necessary part of *Discipline*, and altogether fit to be used, to make them duly sensible of it, and afraid ever after to repeat it. Which is so far from being an *unkind* part towards them, that in reality it is the *truest* way of *shewing kindness*, being the most proper course to amend them, and to bring them back at once to *their former state of innocence*, and all expressions of *our Favour* too.

And thus it appears, that so long as we are careful to shew our Enemies all that *Justice*, *Charity*, and *Peace*, which is due to our *Neighbour at large*, and to all other Persons; we have as much Love for them as God requires, though we *still remember their Injuries*,

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and *Unkindnesses*, or *think the worse of their Persons* as we have just cause, or *use more Reserve*, and *keep a greater distance towards them* in our Carriage, and the like, than we did before they had provoked us. We shew all the Love which is expected when we are not wanting to them in any Offices of *common Charity* and *Neighbourhood*. This makes us accepted with Almighty God, and so fits us for the *Holy Sacrament*: So that although we do not admit them to our *particular Esteem* and *Friendship*, whilst they have not sufficiently evidenc'd that *Repentance*, which should qualifie them for it, that ought not to put us back, and hinder us from partaking in it.

As for *these* Hindrances then, which detain some good People from this *Feast*, viz. their *remembring injuries*, or *thinking the worse of their Enemies*, or *carrying themselves towards them at a distance*, or *excluding them from all particular Trust* and *Confidence*, and the like; so long as they shew them all that Love which is due to *all Men* out of *Common Charity* and *Neighbourhood*, and are ready to shew them *more* when their *Repentance* fits them for it; they ought not in any wise to put them by it. They are  
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no Breach of that Charity which God has required, and therefore do not unfit them for the Holy Sacrament; so that when they are all their hindrance, they need not stay away, but may chearfully approach to it.

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## CHAP IV.

### *Of Law-Suits.*

#### The Contents.

*They are an Hindrance from the Communion, when there is sin in them. They are not sinful in themselves, which is shewn,*

- 1. From the necessity of them.*
- 2. From the Magistrates Office being appointed for them.*
- 3. From God's taking Legal Determinations upon himself, as if he were the Author of them.*
- 4. From Courts erected by consent in the Apostles Days, which ministred to them. These St. Paul prescribed to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 6.*

*They are the Assemblies mention'd Jam. 2. 2, 5. From our Saviour's, and St. Paul's Practice, who, in claiming the Benefit of them, warranted and authorized them.*

*An objection from Mat. 5. 38, 39, 40. considered; which is shewn not to condemn defending ourselves in any case when others implead us; nor moving Suits in all, but only in case of lighter Losses and Indignities, such as our Saviour there mentions, or making them minister to Revenge*

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in any others. And 1 Cor. 6. 7. answer'd, which makes them not a Damning sin, but only, when some Virtuous ends do not require them, a Defect and Diminution. But they are sinful, 1. When they are begun upon an unjustifiable Ground. Such they always are, 1. When they are Vindictive, not Reparative; as when we sue insolvent Persons, as others upon such Words or Actions, for which, besides costs, no Damages that are valuable are like to be allotted us. 2. When they are for Reparation of small things, which countervail not the evil and hazard of a Suit, but ought to be a matter of Patience and Forgiveness, and so be quietly put up without recourse to it. In judging of this smallness, we must not estimate by our own Pride and Passions; but by the reality of things, and the judgment of indifferent, humble and dispassionate Persons. This is true, not only in case of Injuries to our own selves, but also in case of Trust, when we have the charge of others. 2. Suits are sinful when they are carried on by a sinful management: As they are, when they make us Transgress any of those Duties towards our Adversaries, which oblige us towards all Persons. To avoid all these in suing is an hard point: So we must be slow in coming to it, and



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*very circumspect when we are forced upon it. The Answer to this Hindrance summ'd up.*

**B**ESIDES those Particulars, which I have considered in the *last Chapter*, there is *another want of Charity*, which may seem of greater weight, and which is most commonly pleaded in Excuse of mens abstaining from the Holy Sacrament; and that is the point of *Law-Suits*. For this is very frequently given as a Reason why men dare not receive the Communion, because they have a *Legal Controversie with their Neighbours, and a Suit depending*.

Now as to *Law-Suits*, when they have *no sin* in them, they are like all other *indifferent* things, and *need not hinder* men: but when they are *sinful*, they are like all other *sins*, *i. e.* they unfit us till we shew *Repentance*, and ought to hinder us so long as we continue in them. But as then they are an hindrance to a *worthy Receiving*; so are they equally to a *worthy Prayer*, and to all *just hopes of Heaven*. Whilst we go on with them, we cannot pray to God, or think to have our sins pardon'd, or, should we be snatch'd away to Judgment in this state, expect to be happy in another World. And this is a state, wherein

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wherin no considerate man will persist for one moment. But when he sees his Suit is so offensive to God, and brings his Eternal welfare into so great hazard, he will either manage it more innocently, so as that there shall be no offence in it; or break it off without delay, and instantly put an end to it. And when once he has done this, or is fully purposed in his own mind so to do; he is again a Friend of God, and fit to joyn in the Holy Sacrament, as well as in Prayers, or in any other part of Worship.

Thus doth the weight of this *Hindrance* from the Communion, lye in the *innocence*, or *unlawfulness* of the *Suit* which is depending. And therefore that Persons *at Law* may know when they are unfit to Communicate till they have put a stop to it, and when they may do it notwithstanding it: I shall here state the case of *Law-Suits*, and shew when a *Trial* is our *Fault*, and when 'tis *innocent*, that so we may know when we *need not*, and when we *ought to be hindred* by it.

In pursuit of this, I shall endeavour to clear up these two Particulars.

1. *A Suit at Law is not a thing unlawful in itself, but may be innocent if nothing else comes in to make a sin of it.* But then,

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2. *It is our sin, and a matter of our account, when it is either upon an unjustifiable Ground, or carried on by a sinful management.*

1. *I say a Suit at Law is not a thing unlawful in itself, but may be innocent if nothing else comes in to make a sin of it.*

It is no unlawful thing barely to dispute a Title, or to bring an Action; it is in some Cases allowed, as well as in others it is prohibited: So that a man may be Faultless that has a Suit, unless something more comes in to make him a Transgressor in it. The offence lies not in the *Nature* of it, so as to be inseparable from the *Thing*; but only in the *Cause*, or in the *manner of Suing*. For as *St. Paul* said of the *Law of God* among the *Jews*, so may we of the *Laws* of our *several Countries*; the *Law* is a good thing, if a man use it lawfully, 1 Tim. 1. 8. it is no sin to use it, or take the benefit of it, but only to transgress some other Precept, or joyn some other sin with it when we do.

Now this may appear,

1. *From the necessity of it.*

2: *From the Magistrates Office being appointed for it.*

3. *From God's taking a Legal Determination upon himself, as if he were the Author of it.*

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4. From *Courts being Erected by consent in the Apostles Days, to Minister to it.*

5. From *the Practice of our Blessed Saviour, and St. Paul, who claimed the Benefit of it, and thereby plainly warranted and authorized it.*

1. It appears, I say, from the necessity of it. A Tryal at Law must needs be innocent in itself when no thing else corrupts it, because it is a thing we cannot want, and there is no living in this World without it. For take away Law, which should secure innocent mens Properties, and bridle all Envious, Angry, Spiteful, Covetous, Insolent, and Ambitious mens rapacious, and encroaching Humours: And, since all places are fully stored with these injurious Tempers (the Wicked being by far the greatest numbers) the Quiet and Conscientious must flee into Woods and Deserts, or, if they stay to Associate with others, become every where a Prey to their greedy, and usurping Neighbours. If there were no Laws to protect them, there were no living in this World for good Men; and in effect there would be none, if it were a sin in them to try a Title, or Right themselves by them. For no man that had a mind to it, would be aw'd

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from doing wrong by a Law that is always to be a Sword in a Scabbard, and must never be pleaded against him, or executed upon him when he transgresses it. The use of Law then in this World is absolutely necessary to *all Society*, to *keep Peace* and *Justice* in all Converse, and to *protect* and *encourage* all such as desire to *serve God*, and to be *Conscientious*. And since there is that necessity of it for God's Service, and all Virtuous Ends: It cannot in its own Nature be a thing offensive, and unlawful to us. It cannot be itself a Sin, which God has made so absolutely necessary to keep all others out: It must needs be allowed by him, since without it his own ends of Peace and Justice cannot be attain'd. It is at least sure an *innocent*, if not a *good* thing, which gives the only protection to all Goodness, and without which there is no living for Good Men in Societies, where they may do God publick Service, and draw in others, nor indeed any safe abode for them upon the Earth at all.

2. That a Suit *at Law* is not *sinful* in itself, but may sometimes be *innocent*, appears from *the Magistrates Office* being appointed for it.

One part of *the Magistrates Office* lies, indeed, in *protecting* his Subjects against all

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Chap. 4. *men from the Commission.* 311

all *Foreign Force* and *Invasions*. But his most *ordinary* and *constant* work, is to *administer Justice*, and *maintain Peace* among *themselves*; which is done by *hearing Causes*, and *judging in all Controversies and Arraignments*, giving Sentence on the side which the Law Favours, and where the Right lies. Thus is it the Magistrates Office to *hear Causes* or *Suits at Law*, and to *decide* them. And this work he doth not assume to himself, either *without*, or *against God's liking*; but according to his *appointment*, and altogether with his *approbation*. For by me, says *Wisdom*, *Kings Reign*, and *Princes Decree Justice*, Prov. 8. 15. And the *Powers* that be, says *St. Paul*, are *appointed of God*, they are *Gods Ordinance*, Rom. 13. 1, 2. And since God himself appoints them to hear our *Causes*, we may well presume he will not look upon it as our sin to bring them to their *Hearing*. For God would never appoint an *Ordinance* to Minister only to Mens sins, and to put them in a way of multiplying *Offences*; so that since he has appointed *Officers* to Hear it, a *Suit at Law* in its self must needs be innocent, and capable to be carried on without any sin at all.

Nay, God has not only appointed the Magistrates Office for it. But moreover,

3 When

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3. When a *Legal Determination* is given, he takes it upon himself, as if he were the *Author* of it; which is still a farther Evidence that we do not sin barely in seeking to it.

He takes a *Legal Determination*, I say, upon himself, as if he were the *Author* of it. In the *Jewish State*, God was their *Political Prince* and *Sovereign*, and the *Judges* among them were as much his *Deputies*, and did represent his *Person*, as now the *Judges* do the *Person* of their several *Princes* in all other *Nations*. And therefore *Moses* told them when he appointed them, that the *Judgment* was *God's*, and that they gave *Sentence* only as his *Deputies*, and *Judg'd* not for themselves, but for the *Lord*, Deut. 1. 17.

Now, tho' other *Nations* cannot look upon God as their *Secular King*, and *State-Head* in all those *Points* which the *Jews* could, for he gave them *Laws* in *Civil Affairs*, and issued out *Directions* in *State Exigencies*, and the like: Yet as to this they can, that all their *Governors* are but *Substitutes* under him, and that he owns what is legally, and justly Determined by them. For the *Magistrate* he looks upon as his *Minister* and *Viceroy*, who doth all things in his *Name* and *Stead*; the *Power*, says *St. Paul*, is  
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*the Minister of God, Rom. 13. 4.* And since he acts as *his Servant*, he takes his judicial Determination upon himself, as if it were his own, and he were the Author of it. For this he doth plainly in *Criminal Causes*, and the Case is the same in all other *Judicial* that are not *Criminal*. When any man is wrong'd, saith he, let him not *avenge himself*, for *Vengeance is mine, I will repay it, i. e.* by the Magistrate who is my *avenger to Execute Wrath*, so then when he punishes, you may look upon it as if I had done it, *Rom. 12. 19. & 13. 4.*

And since a Legal Determination is owned by God himself as if he were the Author of it, we may be sure, whilst all things else are right, that there is no hurt barely in our seeking of it. It can be no sin to ask what God grants, for *he bears not Sinners* in their Sins, *Joh. 9. 31.* nor can it give any Offence in a controverted Case, to appeal to his own Sentence. So that since in all Legal Determinations it is God himself, who by his Ministers passes Judgment; we may be assured that we do not displease him in applying ourselves thereto, when there is just cause for it.

4. That a *Suit at Law*, and all *Judicial*

*al*



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*al Process* is not in it self a *Sin*, appears from *Courts* being *Erected* by consent in the *Apostles* days, for the *Management* and *Conduct* of them.

Now that such *Courts* were then *Erected*, I shall shew from *two* places; one of *St. Paul*, wherein he *prescribes* them; and another of *St. James*, wherein he makes *mention* of them.

1. It appears from one place in *St. Paul*, wherein he *prescribes* them; and that is *1 Cor. 6.* where he orders the *Corinthians* to appoint *Courts of Judgment* among themselves, that so they might have no need to expose their Religion, by impleading one another before the *Heathen Tribunals*. Do not ye know, says he, that the *Saints* shall judge the *World*? And if the *World* shall be judg'd by you, are ye unworthy to judge the *smallest* matters, or unworthy of the *smallest*

† Κριτηρίαν ἐλα-  
χίστων.

\* Ἐὰν κριθῆναι  
ἐν αἰσιν βίου πνεύ-

† Ἐξ ὁσίων καὶ  
ἀκατάστατων

† *Judicatures*? If then ye have *Judgment* of things pertaining to this *Life*, or if ye have recourse to \* *Secular Judicatures*; go not before *Unbelievers*, but set some, yea, rather than *Infidels*, those that are least esteemed, or † set at nought in the *Church*, set

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set them, I say, to judge,  
or in the \* Chair of Judg- \* Τῆς καθίστα-  
ment, v. 2, 4.

Thus doth he advise them to erect a-  
mong themselves standing Courts by con-  
sent, when, the Power being in Heathens  
hands, they could not otherwise be sup-  
plied in their own Body with Seats of  
Judgment.

2. It appears also from another place  
in St. James, wherein he makes mention  
of them: And that is Jam. 2. 2, 3, 4, If  
there come into your As-  
sembly, or † Synagogue a † Συναγωγῆς  
man with a Gold Ring, &c.

Into your Assembly, i. e. your Judicial  
Court, where this respect of Persons was  
not to be permitted.

That the word here  
rendred \* Assembly, or \* Συναγωγῆς  
Synagogue, signifies some-  
times more particularly Court Assemblies,  
and Judicial Consistories, appears from  
Mat. 10. 17. where our Saviour tells  
his Disciples of being delivered up to  
Consistories, and scourged  
in their \* Synagogues, \* ἐν ταῖς συνα-  
i. e. in their Judgment γογῶν αὐτῶν.  
Halls. And so also Mat.

22. 34.

And that it ought to signifie such Con-  
sistories

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*stories and Court Assemblies* (which were then used both in *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil* Affairs) in this place, appears both from the *thing it self*, and from *several particulars* here spoken of *these Assemblies*, which seem so to determine it.

*The thing it self*, I say, seems so to require it. For in these Assemblies *St. James* condemns all respect of persons, and discrimination of Rich and Poor, by giving Honour according to Peoples Qualities; which was unlawful only in *Judicatures*, but is a *Duty in Conversation* and *Common Carriage*. For it is an *Apostolical* Precept, to give Honour to whom Honour is due, *Rom. 13. 7.* And those *Servants*, who have believing Masters, are forbid to with-draw any thing of their Respect, presuming upon their *Spiritual Kindred*, or to Honour them the less, because they are become their Brethren in being Believers, *1 Tim. 6. 2.* So that although in *Judgment-Seats*, not mens Qualities, but Causes only ought to be respected; yet in other Assemblies a regard may be given to their Persons, and 'tis commendable so to do.

And *several Particulars* here spoken of *these Assemblies* seem so to determine it. For the *Offenders* here taxed with *Respecting* Persons in them, are said to have a *Foot-stool*,

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stool, which belongs to *Chairs of State* and *Judicatures*; to give *Evil Judgment*: to pass *Sentence* against the poor *Mans Cause*, without deliberating on it, or debating it; and to transgress the *Law* in making a difference according to mens *Qualities*, particularly in bidding the *Rich* to sit, and the *Poor* to stand, which was expressly forbid by a *Canon* of the *Jews* to all that sate in *Judgment*: All which shew that *Courts of Judicature* are the *Assemblies* here specified.

The *Offender* here taxed, I say, for *Respecting Persons* in these *Assemblies*, are said to have a *Foot-stool*. For so the *Apostle* expresses himself, v. 3. *Ye have respect to him that wears the gay cloathing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good Place; and say to the Poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my Foot-stool.* And this is a probable intimation of their *Dignity* and *Authority* in the place where they sate. For *Foot-stools* ordinarily are *Appendages* only of the *Chairs of Great Persons*, who have *Power* and *Superiority* over others, as of *Princes* on their *Thrones*, and *Judges* upon *Tribunals*.

They are said to give *Evil Judgment*, i.e. to pass *Sentence* on the wrong side, as he is like to do who tries not *Things*, but *Persons*, and determines from *By-respects*,  
not

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not from the *merits of the Cause* which is  
to be decided. By this respect of *Persons*,  
says he, *Ye are become Judges of Evil*  
*Thoughts, i. e. you give Evil and Perverse*  
*Judgments, v. 4.*

They are said to *pass Sentence on the*  
*Poor Mans Cause, without deliberating on*  
*it, or debating it. Ye say to the Rich, saith*  
*he, Sit thou here ; and to the Poor,*

+ So the Greek  
is literally to be ren-  
dred. The words  
are *οὐκ ἐκρί-  
ναι ἐν αὐτοῖς*,  
and ye have not  
disputed it among  
your selves, not  
are ye not parti-  
al in your selves ?  
by way of Interro-  
gation, as we tran-  
slate it. For *ἐ* is  
wont to ask a Que-  
stion, only when it  
is put first, not  
when it has another  
word before it, as  
*οὐ* is here. And  
*ἐκρίναι* in the  
Passive signifies not  
ye have made a difference, or  
acted partially, which is expressed by the Active  
*ἐκρίνω* but ye have not been in doubt or dispute  
about it, which is a signification that ordinarily agrees  
to it. For so 'tis rendred, Mat. 21. 21. Mark 11. 23.  
Rom. 4. 20. Jam. 1. 6. and in other places.

\* *Ἐν αὐτοῖς.*

*Stand thou at a distance*  
*there : † And ye are not*  
*doubtful, or debate his*  
*Cause in or \* among your*  
*selves, but are Judges of*  
*evil Thoughts, or give per-*  
*verse Judgments ; for so*  
*the words are most natu-*  
*rally rendred, and not,*  
*as we do, are ye not partial*  
*in yourselves, and Judges of*  
*Evil Thoughts ? v. 3, 4.*  
And this shews plainly  
that their respect of *Per-*  
*sons* was expressed in Ju-  
*dicial Process, in giving*  
*rash Sentence in favour of*

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the Rich, without ever staying to hear the Plea, or weigh the Reasons of the Poores Cause.

They are said to *transgress the Law in this regarding Persons*, and treating them differently according to the difference of their outward State and Condition. When in this different Carriage towards Rich and Poor, *ye have respect of Persons*, says he, *ye commit sin, and are convinced of the Law*, which plainly forbids such practice, as *Transgressors*, v. 3, 9. And this seems clearly to restrain it to their Court-Assemblies. For in Judgment there is a Law forbidding all respect of Persons, *Ye shall not respect Persons in Judgment, but you shall hear the small as well as the great*, Deut. 1. 17. & Levit. 19. 15. But there is no Law that forbids it, yea, rather, since St. Paul enjoyns us to *give Honour where Honour is due*, and directs *Servants to pay never the less, but rather more Reverence to their Masters, because they are Believers*, and would not have \* *Confusion* introduced, but *Order kept in the*

\* 1 Cor. 14. 33.

*Church*, as well as in other places; there may seem enough, not only to warrant, but to recommend it in all other Cases. Besides, what is still a farther Evidence of this point, they are said particularly to *transgress*

gress the Law in bidding *the Rich to sit, and the Poor to stand*, v. 3, 9.

\* Dr. Ham. An- which, as a \* Great man  
not. in loc. observes, was a thing ex-  
pressly forbid by a Canon

of the *Jews* to all that sate in Judgment. For that required in all *Suits* and *Judicial Tryals* betwixt *Rich* and *Poor*, that either *both should stand*, or *both should sit*. Which is a thing, as he adds, that the *Jews* observe at this day in hearing *Causes*; for then, if one presuming upon his *Quality* take a *Seat*, the *Judge* presently says to the other, *Sit thou down also*.

And thus I think it appears, that the *Assemblies*, which in this intricate place *St. James* mentions, are *Court-Assemblies*, and *Judicial Consistories*; both because the *Nature of the thing* seems to require it, since in them he forbids all respect of *Persons*, which elsewhere is not prohibited; and also because *several particulars* here spoken of them seem so to determine it. For they are said to be *such Assemblies*, wherein is a *Foot-stool*, the usual Appendant to *Chairs of State*, and *Seats of Judgment*; wherein men were *Judges of Evil Thoughts*, i. e. judged wrong, and gave *perverse Sentence*; wherein they *Condemned the Poor mans Cause* without deliberating on it, and debating it; wherein to respect  
Persons,

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*Persons, was against a plain Law forbidding it, as we find there in a very express one in Judicial Proceedings, but none at all, nay, rather the contrary in all other Cases; and, lastly, such wherein to bid a Rich man sit, and a Poor man stand, was a transgression of a Precept, as in Court-Assemblies it plainly is, being against an express Canon of the Jews in Judgment. By all which I suppose it may appear, that Judicial Consistories are the Assemblies here intended.*

Thus were Judicatures prescribed, and ordinarily used in the Apostles Days. St. Paul appoints the *Corinthians* to erect them; and St. James makes mention of them as of an ordinary thing among them; and that too without passing any mark of dislike upon the Courts themselves, when he blames that partiality and respect of Persons which they shewed in them. These Judicatures, indeed, were erected by their own consent among themselves; and were not imposed on them by Power and Authority, as other Legal Tribunals are. But they serv'd for the same end of hearing Causes, and passing such Sentence as should take effect, and put an end to Controversies, as other Judgment-Seats; so that the same thing was done by them in suing in their Courts, which



which is now done by us in *ours*. In our *Judgment-Halls*, 'tis true, where things are managed by Advocates, that oftentimes seek *Conquest* and not *Justice*, and ransack all Reserves of Law to support, as long as *Craft* can do it, an unrighteous Cause; there is more room for ill Arts, which bring more sin into our *Pleadings*. But that is not a Fault inseparable from *Suits*, but is the sin of *Managers*; it lies not *naturally upon the thing*, but only upon the *Contingent circumstances and manner of doing*; so that if we are careful to keep it free from them, a Suit in it self may still be innocent, and carried on as lawfully in our Courts, as it was in those of the Apostles Days.

And as this Lawfulness of Judicial Process appears from these *Legal Courts* erected in the Apostles Days to *minister to it*: So doth it yet farther,

5. From the *Practice of our Blessed Saviour*, and St. Paul, who claimed the benefit of it, and thereby plainly warranted and authorized it.

Our *Blessed Lord himself*, I say, claimed the Benefit of it. For when the Officer, in the *High-Priest's* presence, struck him with the *Palm of his Hand*, he openly complains of the illegality of the Act, and

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and expostulates before him for a redress of it. *If I have spoken Evil*, says he, *testifie against me, and bear witness of the Evil, but if well, why smitest thou me?* Joh. 18. 22, 23.

And after him *St. Paul* was not afraid to plead his own Cause, and serve himself of Law, when others went about to use him with Violence, contrary to it. For when the Chief Captain ordered him to be *scourged uncondemned*, he pleads the *Legal Priviledge* of a Roman, who ought not to be so treated, *Act. 22. 24, 25.* And when the Magistrates of *Philippi*, contrary to all Law and Priviledge, had *scourged him* and *Silas*, without any Hearing of their Cause; he threatens them for it, and would not put it up, unless in Compensation they would *come themselves* in Person to *release them out of Prison*, and do them Honour before all the Multitude, *Act. 16. 36, 37, 38, 39.* Nay, he uses all *wise Arts of Law* to maintain a *Righteous Cause*, and when he was not like to have *Justice* done him in one Court, *protests* against it, and claims the Benefit of *Appeal* to another. For when *Festus*, *willing to do the Jews a Pleasure*, would have had him *go up* to be *judg'd before him at Jerusalem*, in the way whereto the Jews *design'd to murder him*; he answered.

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*swered, I stand at Cæsar's Judgment-Seat, where I ought to be judged; if I have committed any thing worthy of Death, I refuse not to die; but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, as thou very well knowest the Law of the Empire is my Protection, and no Man may deliver me unto them, I Appeal unto Cæsar, Act. 25. 3, 9, 10, 11.*

And thus from all these Considerations it appears, that a Suit *at Law* is not a thing unalterably evil, and *unlawful in it self*; but may very innocently be carried on, if no sin mixes with it to turn it into a Transgression. It is a thing which God has allowed when we have *just cause* for it, and are guilty of *no Vice* in the *Course* and *Conduct* of it. For he himself has put us into a necessity of it, and has appointed the *Magistrates Office* for it, and takes upon himself the *just Judgment* which is given in it; and, when Christians became a distinct Body, *Courts* were set up by the order of the *Apostles* themselves to *Minister* to it; and, as it fell in their way, our *Blessed Lord*, and *St. Paul* too have served their own turns by it, By all which 'tis plain that a course of Law may sometimes innocently be used, since otherwise God and these *Good Men*, could never have been thus concerned about it.

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But against all this some may urge *two* places, which seem to take away all Suits among Christians, and to forbid all legal Defence, by requiring a patient Sufferance of all Losses and Indignities, which should occasion them. One is, *Matt. 5. 39.* in point of *Indignities*; the other is, *Matt. 5. 40.* and *1 Cor. 6. 7.* in point of *Losses* and *spoil of Goods*. And if both these must be suffered with *Patience*, without any Legal Defence or Righting of our selves; what is there left to be matter of Civil Causes, for us to Sue and Contend for?

These Pleas seem fair, and therefore it is fit they should have an Answer.

One Place seems to forbid all *Suits* and *Legal Righting of our selves*, in case of *Affronts* and *Indignities*; and that is, *Matt. 5. 38, 39.* *Ye have heard,* says our Saviour, *that it hath been said in the Law of Moses, an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth:* i. e. When any one had offered these Violences to them, they were allowed by judicial Process (this Law of Retaliation being directed to the Judges, *Exod. 21. 23, 24.*) to inflict the very same on them again. But in opposition to this, *I say unto you, resist not Evil, or the Evil* † Man, not only forcibly by Private Violence,

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\* Ἀντιστῆναι.

|| as, Jer. 49. 19. who will appoint me the time, or, as it is rendred in the Margin, consent me to plead; which the LXX express by Τίς ἀντιστῆσεται μοι; And so again, Chap. 50. 44.

Verf. 40. If any Man will Sue thee at the Law, and take away thy

\* Χιτῶνα.

tend with him for that, hazard a further Loss, and let him take thy

|| Ἰματίον.

|| Cloak or upper Garment also. Conformable whereto the Apostle tells the Corinthians, that they are utterly in a fault, in not suffering themselves to be Defrauded, but seeking Remedy by a Suit, or going to Law at all, 1 Cor. 6. 7.

Now in Answer to these places, I observe,

1. That they are not meant literally and absolutely, of turning our Cheek to all Smitters, or yielding our Goods to all ravenous Encroachers: Yea, that they do not forbid

but also legally by publick process, for so the

\* word rendred Resist

|| sometimes signifies, and its opposition to these

Legal Retaliations among the Jews here im-

ports. But whosoever shall smite thee on the right

cheek, turn to him the other. And so again in case of

Losses and spoil of Goods,

Coat or \* inner Garment; rather than con-

tend with him for that, hazard a further Loss, and let him take thy

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us at any time to serve our selves of Law, when others implead us; nor at all times to seek unto Magistrates, and implead others.

2. That they are meant proverbially, and only forbid moving Suits in lighter Losses and Indignities, such as our Lord there mentions, or making the Law the Minister of Revenge in any others.

1. I say, they are not meant Literally and absolutely, of turning the Cheek to all Smitters, or yielding our Goods to all ravenous Incroachers; nor forbid us at any time to serve our selves of Law, when we are brought before Tribunals. For this our Blessed Lord himself did, as we have seen, when the Officer struck him before the High-Priest; he offers not himself for another blow, but argues against the illegality of what he had already received, Joh. 18. 22, 23. And this St. Paul did, when the Chief Captain would have scourged him uncondemned; he pleads the priviledg of a Roman, which ought to secure him from being so hardly treated, Acts 22. 25. And this he did again, when Festus would have sent him to Jerusalem to be Tryed; he appeals to Cesar, and claims the Benefit of his Judgment-Seat, where he ought to be Judged, Acts 25. 9, 10, 11. They did not invite fresh injuries, by laying themselves open to

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them;

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them; but stood upon their own Defence, and Legally withstood them. So that these Precepts are not to be taken in the Literal Compass, (in which sense *St. Paul*, yea; and *Christ himself* too, would have been Transgressors,) nor so as to forbid us to serve our selves of Law at at time when we are brought before Tribunals: since *St. Paul*, who very well understood them, nay, our Blessed Lord, who to the height fulfilled them, have taught and *authoriz'd* us by their Example so to do.

Nay, they do not forbid us in all Cases to bring others before Magistrates, and seek unto Judicatories to Right our selves. For *St. Paul* did something towards this, in his Contest with the *Philippian Magistrates*. Where, though he was an Offender against the Laws, yet in regard they had treated him illegally, in scourging him and *Silas* uncondemned, against the Priviledge of *Romans*, he terrifies them with it, and would not put it up, 'till they Compounded with him upon his own Terms, and brought him honourably out of Prison in the Eyes of all the Citizens, *Acts* 16. 36, 37, 38, 39. Besides, as I have already shewn, that this is sometimes lawful among Christians, is evident from the *Law-Courts* in the *Apo-*  
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*files Days*, which were prescribed by the Apostles themselves for this very purpose. It is clear from the necessity of it, since there is no living in this World for honest and Conscientious Men without it. From *God's* having appointed an Officer on purpose, the *Magistrate* I mean, to take care of it; and from his taking a just *Law-Determination* upon himself, as if he were the *Author* of it. So that *some seeking unto Courts*, and judicial endeavours to Right our selves, are still innocent; and therefore all cannot be here prohibited.

As for these Places then, they are not meant *Literally* and *Absolutely* of turning our Cheek to all *Smiters*, or of yielding our Goods to all ravenous *Encroachers*: They do not forbid us at any time to serve our selves of Law when others unjustly implead us; not at all times to seek unto *Magistrates*, and implead others.

But,

2. They are meant *Proverbially*, and only forbid *MOVING Suits in Lighter Losses and Indignities*, such as our Lord there mentions; or making Law the Minister of Revenge in any others.

They require *Patience*, and forbid *MOVING Suits in Lighter Losses and Indignities*. To turn the Cheek to a Smiter, is a

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*Proverbial Speech, which denotes our calm endurance and patient bearing of injuries. And so the Afflicted Mans Patient carriage is exprest, Lam.3. — he giveth his Cheek to him that smiteth him, v. 30. And to let*

him that *Sues for the Coat,*  
 \* *Xlwa.* i. e. the \* *Shirt or inner Garment, take the Cloak*

*also, is a Proverbial Phrase too, (for in the truth of the Letter, a Shirt is no likely matter of a Law-Suit,) and signifies an uncontesting sufferance of such small Losses, tho' that may expose us to bear some others, and those more weighty ones. So that when our Saviour bids us give the other Cheek to the Smiter, and the upper Garment to him that has taken away the inner, i. e. to venture the inviting him to a second injury by his success, rather than to ingage in variance: His meaning is, that in these, or such other light injuries, which either leave no permanent effect, or only such as may be born without any great Prejudice, we should exercise our Patience, and not go to Law, either to recompense the past, or to prevent future sufferings. And therefore if in these smaller matters we enter Actions, and implead others, that indeed is our Sin; since here he enjoyns us Charitably and Patiently to bear, and to Sue for them.*

And

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And as they forbid *all Suits in these*; so do they all *Malice*, and making *Law* the instrument of *Revenge*, in any others. Ye have heard, saith our Saviour, that it hath been said *an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth*, i. e. they were allowed in course of Law to return ill who had suffered it, when, as in these instances mentioned, they had no other benefit by it, but only the pleasure of seeing him smart who had occasioned it; which is properly Revenging it, for to *Revenge* an injury, is in *hatred to return it*. But in opposition to this, *I say unto you*, (so that Revenge being the thing there allowed, it must in the opposition be here prohibited) *resist not evil*, i. e. in any kind of Resistance, which is Revenging it as they might: *But whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other, &c.* i. e. Be readier to suffer another injury, than spitefully to commence a Suit, or in any sort to Revenge what is received already, v. 38, 39, 40.

As for this place in *St. Matthew* then, it forbids us not to *defend ourselves* by Law in any case, nor in all cases, to *bring an action*, and *implead others*. But it only forbids Suits in *lighter Losses* and *Indignities*, such as our Lord there mentions, and making the Law the instrument of *Revenge* in weightier matters. Q4 But

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But even in those Cases, where it is no Sin to use Law, and our Saviour Christ has not forbid it : Yet if it is only *our own concern*, and no *point of Trust*, it is a more noble thing, and a greater pitch of *Christian Perfection*. to abstain from it.

When we are in *trust for others*, indeed, this is not to be advised. For we must not be *Generous in Charities at their cost*, nor affect heights in *Patience* when they are to pay for it ; lest whilst we aim at a great pitch of *Passive Virtues*, and *Love towards Offenders*, we be found wanting in *Justice and Faithfulness towards our own Charge*. And this is to be extended not towards *Strangers*, who are voluntarily committed to us ; but also in due measure to our own *Children and Families*, for whom we ought to

\* *Cor.* 12. 14. \* *provide convenient support*, and whom *God and*

*Nature have intrusted to us.*

But when the Loss is only to *ourselves*, and doth not any ways *Defraud others* of what they might in *Reason claim* from us ; or, as in the Case of *Pious or Charitable Works*, of what we had allotted them in our own *Designs* ; though without Sin we might Sue for it, yet doth it shew more of that *Charity*

\* *1 Cor.* 13. 5. *which* \* *seeks not her own,*  
and

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and is a nobler attainment in a Christian, Patiently to sit down under it, as *Arthenagoras* tells us the Christians in his time usually did, who,

\* when their Goods were violently seized, would not draw the injurious Persons into Judgment. And this *St. Paul* affirms of it, 1 *Cor.* 6.

There is utterly, or † altogether a fault, or a \* defect among you, because

ye go to Law at all one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded? v. 7. He doth not condemn it as a Sin, but only as a defect, or thing that lessened them. Their Suing before Unbelievers, he tells them was a sinful Course; because, as their Case stood, who impleaded each others, and that too for injuries, it was a Scandal to their Enemies, and exposed the Christian Cause, v. 1. 6. But as for their bare going to Law it self, it was not so. For he tacitely intimates they might do it before the Saints—Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to Law before the unjust, saith he, and not before the Saints, much rather? v. 1. Nay he orders them that they should do it,

\* Their way is,  
Παύλου μὴ ἀν-  
τιπύπειν, ὡς ἀρ-  
παζόμενοι μὴ δι-  
καζέσθαι. *Athen.*  
*Legat. p. 12.*

† Ὁλως.  
\* Ἠτλημα.

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and erect Judicatures among themselves for that intent. Go not before Infidels, says he, but set those who are least esteemed among your selves to Judge, or set them in the Seat, or

\* Καθίστητε.

\* Chair of Judgment, v. 4.

2, 3. This was ordinarily

done in other places, where they had Judicial Assemblies, as I have shewn from Jam. 2. 2. Yea, and where they had not, but must implead before a Gentile Judgment-Seat, when the Scandal that now accompanied their Case was not incur'd, he himself had given countenance to it, and threatned Legally to Right himself before the Heathen Magistrate, Act. 6. 37, 38, 39. But although their Suits at Law in weightier Cases were no Sin, yet he tells them they were their Lessening and Diminution; and that albeit they might with a safe Conscience use them, yet would it shew more Contempt of Earthly Things, and Mortified Passions, more Generous Charity, and Stronger Patience, and a greater height of Christian Perfection, to

refrain. It is, says he, altogether not a † Sin, but a

+ Π'᾽αὐτοῖς.

\* Ἡμῖν.

\* Lessening & Diminution to you, that you go to Law

one with another. And because there is only a Defect, but no Transgression in it; he doth

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not *absolutely* condemn, but only *compa-*  
*ratively* dissuade from it. *Why do not ye*  
*rather take wrong? Why do you not rather*  
*suffer your selves to be defrauded?* 1 Cor.  
6. 7.

As for these places then, which seem  
to forbid Suits, either on *Losses*, or *Indig-*  
*nities*, they do not forbid them *absolutely*,  
and in *all* Cases. They only forbid us to  
fly to them in *smaller* matters, such as  
our Saviour mentions; or to make them  
a *means of Revenge* in *Great ones*; or say  
of Suits in General, where a *publick* end,  
or some *other Virtue* doth not require  
them, that they are, although not our  
*Sin*, yet our *Defect* and *Diminution*. So  
that whensoever they are *sued at Law*,  
the *best* men may *serve themselves* of it;  
and when they are *greatly injured*, though  
'twere *better* to let it alone, yet may they  
*safely seek to it*, and, without any offence  
to God, or wrong to a good Conscience,  
*implead others still*.

And thus it appears that Suits *at Law*  
are not *sinful in themselves*, but may law-  
fully be used if there is no unlawfulness  
in the *Ground*, and *way of manage-*  
*ment*. The thing it self has no sin in it,  
and so may be innocent, if we take care  
that no other sin adhere to it. So that  
barely to try a Title is no matter of any  
man's

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mans account, nor has any offence at all in it.

But although Suits at Law are not thus unlawful in themselves, but may sometimes be innocent : Yet as I said,

2. They are our sin, and a matter of our account, when they are either enter'd upon an unjustifiable Ground, or are carried on by a sinful Management.

1. I say, Suits at Law are our sin, and a matter of our account, when they are begun upon an unjustifiable Ground.

It is not every cause that usually begets it, which can warrant before God, and justify a Law-Suit. For sometimes men are led on to it only by *Revenge*, when they have no lasting Dammage to be repaired, but seek only their Brothers smart, and to be even with him who occasioned theirs : And then the Suit must needs be unlawful, having a sin at the bottom of it. And at other times, when there is a real Dammage, yet it is so trivial, as that the making of it up will not countervail the Evils and Temptations of a Suit : and then it will be sinful still, as wanting a Ground of so much weight, as can bear the burthen of it. For a Tryal at Law, besides its being a costly and painful thing, is also a very perillous State, and a dangerous Temptation. It will be sure to put  
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him we sue to much trouble and pains in Collecting and Examining Evidences, preparing Witnesses, informing Advocates, and attending Courts, which is toyl in it self, and an hindrance to better business: And in the whole Course and Conduct of it, it will put him to constant Charges and Expence. And it will be a State of great Temptation, both to him and to our selves, insnaring us, unless we are very circumspect to prevent it, into covetous Wishes, or delays of Justice, or vexatious Arts, or uncharitable Surmises, and revengeful Thoughts, or deceitful Suggestions and Falsifications, Hypocritically disguising the weakness of our own Cause, or unreasonably aggravating the Flaws of our Adversaries to our own profit and his prejudice, and the like. These sins are ever before men whilst a Suit is depending, they have constant opportunities for them, and are perpetually provoked into them; and it must be a great Conduct and Proof both of their Skill and Care, that must preserve them from being engaged in them. And since there is so much Toyl attending it, so great Charge occasioned by it, and so many Temptations and great Dangers, both to our own Souls, and our Brothers, laid in the way of it; it must not be a light thing, but a weighty Cause indeed, which can over-balance

all



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all these Considerations, and justly draw us to commence it.

But in this point to be more Particular. Suits are *unlawfully* entred, when they are begun, either,

1. *For Revenge, and not for Reparation of Damages.*

Or,

2. *When for Reparation only of small things, which cannot countervail the evil and hazard of a Suit, but ought to exercise our Patience and Forgiveness, and so be put up without Recourse to it.*

I ft. I say, Suits are *unlawfully* entred, when they are *Vindictive*, not *Reparative*, and are begun only for *Revenge*, not for *Repair of Damages*. And this they always are, when they are commenced either against *insolvent Persons*; or upon such words and actions against others, for which, besides *Costs*, no *Damages* that are *valuable* are like to be allowed us.

They are not *Reparative*, but *Vindictive*, when they are commenced against *insolvent Persons*. When we sue a *Poor Man*, who cannot pay what he owes, or recompence what he has wrongfully done to us, it is not that our own Sore may be heal'd, but only that his Smart may be wrought by it. For the Law doth not make him *Coin Money* that has it not, but only  
forces

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forces him to pay it, who has it, but will not part with it. To put a *Beggar* in Prison, and run him out at Law to the utmost, is not the way to put Money in his Pocket; so that when we have to do with such, it is only Revenge upon him, and not the Compensation of our own Loss, which can be sought by it. If we go to Right our selves by Law then upon an insolvent man, we go only to return the hurt which he has done, and to be even with him. And this is a great instance of an *hard Heart*, and a *spiteful Spirit*; as is quite contrary to that *Brotherly-kindness*, *Compassion*, and *Forgiveness*, which, how *unworthy* soever he may be of it, yet, so long as the *misery* of his *case* requires it, God has enjoyn'd us to use towards him. It is exactly to deal with him, as the *wicked man* did with his *insolvent Brother* in the *Parable*, which provoked God to return the same Rigour upon his own head again. For when he *ought his Lord ten thousand Talents*, he *freely forgave him* that great *Debt*, because he was *not able to pay it*. But when his *Fellow-Servant*, who *ought him only an hundred Pence*, could not tender down that small sum when he demanded it, he shew'd nothing of that *Compassion* towards this poor Man which God had shewn to him,

but

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but laid hands on him, and cast him into Prison till payment should be made. But when the Fellow-Servants told this to their Lord, he resolves to deal with him in his own way, and strictly exacts that Debt, which otherwise he intended freely to have acquitted, delivering him, as he had done his Brother, to the Tormentors, till all should be discharged. And so likewise shall my Heavenly Father do to you, says our Saviour, if ye from your Hearts forgive not every one his Brother their Trespases, Mat. 18. v. 24, to c. 19.

But if they are comenced against responsible Persons, they are not *Reparative*, but *Vindictive* still, if they are upon such words or actions, for which, besides Costs, no Damages that are valuable are like to be allowed us. A great number of Suits are for abusive Words, or a Box on the Ear, or some other trivial matters, which leave no Permanent ill effects, but, if our Passions may be with-held from estimating them, pass off without making us the worse, or doing us any Prejudice. And in all these, since there is no Damage sticks to us, there is no need of any Reparations. So that if we begin Suits, it is not to indemnifie our selves, but to be vexatious, and afflict others who have afflicted us, wherein consists the very Nature of Revenge.

And

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And this is always *unlawful*, and most expressly forbidden to all us *Christians*. To the *Jews*, indeed, it was allowed in the *Old Testament*. For they were permitted to return ill for ill, and to demand an *Eye for an Eye*, and a *Tooth for a Tooth*, when thereby their own lost Member was not restored, but only their Adversaries sent after it, and, bating the Pleasure of Revenge, they repeated no other Benefit by it, *Mat. 5. 38*. But this is most strictly forbidden to all us *Christians* in the *New*. For we are taught to recompence to no man Evil for Evil, but to overcome Evil with Good, *Rom. 12. 17, 20, 21*. to forgive those that Trespass against us, *i. e.* not to return their injurious, or hard usage, as ever we expect forgiveness of our own Trespases at God's hands, *Mat. 6. 12, 14, 15*. And particularly in opposition to this going to Law for Revenge, our Saviour forbids us Judicially to resist the Evil man, as has been shewn, *i. e.* in course of Law to return the Evil on him, as by Virtue of that Rule, *An Eye for an Eye*, &c. the *Jews* did: But instead of that, by the Phrase of turning one Cheek to him who has struck the other, requires that we patiently submit, and sit down under it, *Mat. 5. 38, 39, 40*.

This then is the *first* thing which  
God.

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God requires to the Lawfulness of all Judicial Tryals; they must never be *Vindictive*, but *Reparative*, and we must not Sue another in order to *his Smart* and *Prejudice*, but only to *heal*, or *secure our own selves*, either by *holding the Goods* which he *claims*, or *repairing the Loss*, which he has *occasioned* us.

2. Suits for *Reparation of Losses* are unlawful, when the Reparations are only of *small things* which cannot *countervail the evil and hazard of a Suit*, but ought to exercise our *Patience* and *Forgiveness*, and so be quietly put up without Recourse to it.

In the Course of *Secular Wisdom*, indeed, which looks only to *Secure the Concerns of this World*, when men are *Rich* or *Potent*, and have *Wealth* or *Interest* enough to go through with it, the *smallest Affronts* or *infringment of their just Power and Priviledge*, are often-times esteemed a sufficient occasion of a *Law-Suit*. For thereby they think they *stop the first Breach* in their *own Right*, which, if it be suffered to be once made, as it is in the Breach of a *Water-Bank*, or a *fortified Wall*, 'tis after that a much easier thing to widen it, They *check an encroaching humour* in the bud, before it had got *Heart*, or *Ground* enough to make a greater Contest.

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Contest. And they shew the World they are not of a *yielding Temper*, that will be *wrong'd or baffled*; and thereby strike an awe, which will keep all others from attempting them, and purchase their own quiet. Upon these, or such like *secular Maxims*, when nothing but the interest of this World guides them, they many times conclude the sleightest wrongs are not to be put up, and therefore, when in any trivial thing their Right is invaded, betake themselves to course of Law for Maintenance and Vindication of it.

But in *Religion* the Case is altered. For that seeks not only what is fit to *secure our selves*, and maintain our *worldly Rights*; but what is fit to maintain an *Universal innocence*, and to shew *Charity* towards others. Its main work lies in lessening the Love of this World, and making us easie to part with any injoyment of this Life, when it is inconsistent with any Duty, and indangers our Passage to a better. And therefore although *secular wisdom* would, perhaps, sometimes advise us, yet will *true Religion* altogether forbid us to go to *Law* for *trivial Losses*. For a Suit at Law, as I have noted, will put our *Adversary* to great *Cost* and *Pains*; and since in Christianity he is our *Neighbour* and our *Brother*, this we ought not to do for little things, whereby

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whereby we shall not gain near so much as  
he loses, for this is not

† Matt. 22. 39. according to the † Com-  
mandment, to *Love him*

*as our selves*. Nay, it will be a *great snare*,  
both to *his* Virtue and *ours*; for although  
it be no state of *direct sin*, yet is it a state  
of very *dangerous Temptation*, there being  
so many ways to offend whilst a Suit is  
carrying on, and it being so very hard to  
avoid them without great Conduct and  
Circumspection. And this also we ought  
not lightly to cast, either in the way of  
our *own* Souls, or of our *Brothers*. Yea,  
we shall not do it, if we have any of that  
*tender Love and Care for Souls* which *Christ*  
has shew'd, and which he requires *us* to  
shew, when, upon a prospect of saving  
them, he commands us, not only to *bear*  
*a Reproach*, or to *part with our Substance*,  
but even to *lay down our own Lives* for  
*others*, 1 Joh. 3. 16.

Thus, when the Damages to be repai-  
red are but of *small* account, and the trou-  
ble and charges of the Suit will take much  
more from him, than we are like to get  
by it: out of our *tender care* of *all Persons*,  
whom God commands us to *Love as we do*  
*our selves*; and out of our *Love to each*  
*others Souls*, and desire to keep, both *our*  
*selves* and *them* from *dangerous Temptations*,  
which

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which would rob us of our *Innocence*, a thing that ought not to be hazarded for trifling Regards; we ought *patiently to bear* the Loss, and not seek out by Law to redress it. And this, as I have intimated, is what our Saviour expressly commanded, *Matt. 5. If one smite thee on the right Cheek, which is a tolerable affront, turn to him the other also, or expose thy self to be smitten again, rather than judicially resist it. And if any man sue thee at the Law, to take away thy Coat, or inner Garment, a thing that may easily be spared, hazard an higher Loss, and let him take thy Cloak also, rather than sue to regain it, v. 38, 39, 40.* So that rather than sue to recover little matters, and enter Actions for small Reparations, we must be content to want them, and sit down without any Repairs at all.

And in rating when things are thus *little and frivolous*, we must not judge by our own *Pride and Passions*, which count nothing little, but aggrandize every affront or injury that is done to our own selves: but by the *reality of things*, and according as we *our selves* should judge were we *humble and dispassionate*, or as they would be judg'd of by *other Holy and Indifferent Persons*. Our own *Pride*, and the *Opinions of the World* would whis-  
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per to us, that *every Trespass against us is intolerable, and deserves a Process; every imputation of a Lye, a Stab; and every actionable Affront, a Suit at least, if not a Challenge.* But *Pride, and Passion, and the Opinions of the World,* must not be our Counsellors: For we *renounced* them at our *Baptism*, when we were first made Christians; and if we would please God, they must not sway, but ought daily to be mortified and subdued in us. And since they are so much our *Sin*, and so directly against our *Baptismal Vow and Profession*: It will be no excuse for going to Law on little *Losses and Indignities*, to say we thought them *Great* through their being our *Advisers*. In judging them what are little things, we must not be governed by our own *Pride and Passions*, but by the reality of things, and the Judgments of dispassionate, humble Persons. And this our Lord plainly shews, by setting down a *Box on the Ear*, (which in reality doth no hurt, nor leaves any permanent effect behind it) among those *light Indignities* which ought not to be a matter of a Suit, though every where the *Pride, and Passions* of men, and particularly at that time the *hughtiness of the Jews*, thought it a great thing, which ought by all means to be recompenced. For this, as a

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\* Learned man observes,  
was their Rule about it.

\* Dr. Lightf.  
Hor. Heb. in Mat.  
5. 39.

Doth any Person give his  
Neighbour a box on the

Ear? let him give him a Shilling, yea, says  
Rabbi Judah, a Pound; or if it were upon the  
Cheek, let him give him

200 † *Zuzes* to make a-

† i.e. in Eng-  
lish coin, 6 l. 5 s.

mends for it. Nay, if he

give him another Box, he  
ought to give him 400 to recompence it. So  
great did they think the Indignity to a Jew-  
ish man, esteeming all their own Nation, as  
he observes from *Maimonides*, even those  
of the most beggarly condition, to be Gentle-  
men, because they were all the Children of  
Abraham.

And thus it appears when a Suit is un-  
lawful upon this first account, viz. its en-  
tring upon an unjustifiable Ground. For such  
it is in all Cases, when we bring an Action  
only for *Revenge*, and not for *Reparation of*  
*Damages*: or when for the *Reparation of*  
such small things, as ought not to expose  
us to all the *Evils* and *Temptations* of a ju-  
dicial Process, but to Exercise our *Patience*  
and *Forgiveness*; which smallness of things  
is to be rated, not by mens *Pride* and *Passi-*  
*ons*, which esteem no ill small that is done  
to themselves, but by the reality of things,  
and the Judgment of *Humble* and *Dispassion-*  
*ate* persons.

And

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And this holds true, not only in Losses and Indignities offered to *our selves*; but also in the Case of *Trust*, when they are offered to *others* who are committed to us. For when Suits are *Sinful*, as we have seen they are in the Case of *Revenge*, and of *lighter affronts and injuries*, which Christ Commands us not to redress by Law, but to bear with Patience: I see no difference, but an *equal unlawfulness*, whether we Sue upon our *own*, or upon *their* Accounts. For surely our taking of a *Trust* doth not engage us to *Disobey* our Lord, or do any *evil* thing; but only to do all that which we can, for those committed to us, as *Good Christians* and *Honest Men*. And therefore in *lighter* matters when Suits are *sinful*, we may no more *Sue* for them, than we can tell a *Lie*, or *Swear an Oath*, or *Over-reach* in their Cause, or be guilty of any *other Transgression*. If they were come up to *Act* in *their own Name*, in these Cases a *Judicial Tryal* would not be *lawful*, but a *sin* in them: And where *they themselves* could not *Sue*, we must not think that *we*, who *Act* only as their *Proxies* and *Representatives*, may do it for them. If these Losses and Indignities, which are shewed to them, were offered to *our selves*, we ought not to commence an *Action*, but to be patient under

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der them; and they have no Reason in the World to think us wanting either in our *Trust*, or *Friendship*, when we do all that to the utmost in *their* Case, which we durst do in *our own*.

So far then as Suits are *Sinful*, and to put up injuries without entring Actions for repairs is a *strict Duty*, as it plainly is in cases of *lighter Losses* and *Indignities*; it equally obliges us in *Trust for others*, as in *our own Business*. Where 'tis no *Duty*, indeed, and a Suit is not a *Sin*, but only a *Defect* and *Diminution*, as it is in the Case of *greater injuries*, there is a Difference, and tho' it were commendable still to refrain in *our own* Case, yet 'tis not in *theirs*. In the former Instances, to forbear is a *necessary* point, having an expresse Precept for it; and necessary things may be done for them by those that represent them, without their *own* consent and approbation. But in these Cases where 'tis no sin, to forbear is no *necessary Duty*, but a *voluntary Act*: and it is no part of our *Trust* to perform voluntary heights, and unrequir'd Generosities at their cost; but if these be done, they must be left to themselves, when, by making it a matter of their *own choice*, they themselves may have the *Virtue*, and the *Reward* of it. So far then as the putting up an injury without

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a Suit is no *Strict Duty*, but only a *Free-will Offering*, and a *Voluntary Act*, it must not be done in *their Case*, tho' in *our own* it were much to be commended. But when *Patience* is a *Duty*, and *Suits* are *sinful*, whether it be *their concern* or *ours* it matters not, for *both* are *equal*. We must be *faithful to our Lord*, and observe the *Duties of Patience, Peace, Forgiveness*, and all other *Laws of God*, in acting for *others* as well as for *our selves*. So that when there is no justifiable Ground of Suit, we must abstain from it, whether it be for *Publick* or for *Private* ends, whether our *Charge* or *we* that are concerned in it. And this I have noted for the use of those, who, I think, are greatly out in this point. For there are several, that *would*, or at least *pretend they would* bear much in their *own Business*, who will bear nothing at all, and yet think they are not *litigious* in commencing Suits for every trifle, when they are in *Trust for others*.

But as some Suits are thus *unlawful*, because they are upon an *unjustifiable Ground*; so, when the *Grounds* are good, are others *unlawful*,

2. Because they are carried on by a *sinful management*.

A Suit at Law is a very *dangerous state*, and has *strong Temptations* to several sins accompanying

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accompanying it. And if, when there is *just Cause* for it, any of *these* are incurr'd in the *management*, it is our *Sin* still, and we shall be put to answer for it.

To shew what *these* are, and when Suits are unlawful upon this account, I observe, that when we have an Action against any Man, we must for all that look upon him as our *Neighbour*, and *love him as our selves*, paying him all that *Justice, Peace, and Charity*, which is due to all Persons. And this is hard to do when Men pursue any *controversies* wherein their Interest is concerned, especially when they are *Publick*, and if they do not succeed, the Eyes of the World look on to see them worsted, as it is in *Law-Suits*. For then *Conquest* is the end that is ordinarily sought, and in prosecution of that Mens *Passions* generally are engaged; and *both* these are opposite to the *Love of others*, and seek only to *please our selves*, and so push us on to transgress this great *Law of Charity* in several instances. where *Conquest* is the end, there is much *Emulation* and *Strife* to gain it, and where *Envy*, or *Emulation*, \* and \* זילא ט.

*Strife* is, saith St. James, *there is confusion and every evil work*, Jam. 3. 16. And where *Passion* is high, and *Anger* is once moved, there a *Law of Love* is

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not like to be observed, for, as the same Apostle says, *the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God*, Jam. i. 20. And since Law-Suits generally have both these attending them, they do too often lead the *Litigants*, God knows, into many breaches of *Justice, Peace, and Charity* towards each other, particularly into these following.

If their Cause is *bad*, they use *delays* to tire out their Adversaries; they *feign Pleas* to gain time for themselves, and *insist* upon *Punctilio's* in his *Proceedings* wholly foreign to the *merits* of the Cause, to make him begin all afresh, and hunt out all *Reserves of Law* to prolong the *Suit*, and suspend the *Sentence*. And this, besides its being most *opposite* to *Love* and *Brotherly-kindness*, and being a course most *uncharitable* and *vexatious*, is also a most *unjust* thing, being a doing *wrong* as far as in them lies, and endeavouring, what they can, to put an hindrance and stop to *Justice*.

And whether it be *good* or *bad*, they generally incur many *Sins* in pursuit of it, and fall into fundry instances of *Injustice* and *Uncharitableness* to succeed in it.

They have a *longing desire* to overcome, and to have the *Verdict* pass for them, be it *right* or *wrong*; which is *coveting* other

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*Mens Goods*, against the Law of the Tenth Commandment, *Exod.* 20. 17. And this disposes them to *Judge* all in *Favor* of their own *Right*, and to *freer* and *murmur* when they have lost the *Verdict*, and to *suspect* (if not *complain*) of *Injustice* in the *Judge* and *Jury*, who were concerned in it; against the plain Duty of *Patience*, *Reverence* to *Governours*, and *meek submission* under Judgment.

They watch their opportunity to *take Advantage* of their *Adversaries* *over-sight*, or to bring the *Tryal* on at a time when he doth not *expect*, or is *unprepared* for it: which is not only against the great Law of *Charity*, that, as *St. Paul* saith, *seeks not her own* at others *Mens hurt*, *1 Cor.* 13. 5; but also against *Justice*, which forbids *Defrauding* or *going beyond our Brother* in any matter, when we can *Over-reach* and *Out-wit* him in it, *1 Thess.* 4. 6.

They suggest *False Pleas*, or supply *Circumstances* out of their own Heads in favour of their Cause, and when a little more would do it, stretch beyond the Truth to *ech* out an *Evidence*, and make the matter full to serve their purpose; which is clearly against the Duty of *Simplicity*, and *speaking the plain Truth* with our *Neighbour*.

They have an *inward hatred* against their *Adversaries*, which makes them en-



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*vicious* when any *good* (especially in the Process of the Cause) befalls them; and *glad* when any *ill* has happen'd to them, and apt to *surmise ill things* of them, and *defame* them as often as they can find a fit occasion, and to watch all opportunities of being *Revenged* on them, and to burst out into *Anger* and *exasperating Carriage*, *Strife* and *Variance*, *Clamour* and *bitter Words* against them, upon any the least Provocation. All which are directly contrary to the Great Duty of Love and Charity,

which † *rejoyces with them that do rejoyce, and weeps with them that weep*; which \* *suffers long and is kind, which thinketh no Evil, which † renders Good for Evil*; which \* *puts away all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking, with all Malice*; and engages us, so far as 'tis † *possible, and as much as in us lies, to live peaceably with all men.*

Lastly, They love to be *vexations*, and *cut out work* for their *Adversaries*, deferring a Tryal several Terms for no other end, but to make them throw away both their Mony and Pains in attending to prevent a Surprise; or putting them to prove  
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needless things, which influence not the merits of the Cause ; or insisting on every fetch of Law, that may be an hindrance in their way, though 'tis no way necessary to the main business ; or studying other mischievous Arts of creating them trouble, and being vexatious ; which is absolutely against the *Loving of our Neighbour as our selves*, and having a *Brotherly-kindness*, and † *doing Good*

as we have opportunity to all Persons ; and is that very sin vvhich St. Paul mentions, and which he expresses by wickedness or mischievousness, i. e. a studying to do mischief, and make \* work for others, Rom. 1. 29.

† Gal. 6. 10.

mentions, and

\* Πονηρία ἐν  
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τὴν πρὸς τὸ πό-  
νητον γινόμενον,  
Suid.

Thus, to mention no more, are all these *Prolongations of Suits*, and *delays of Justice*, these *Covetous Desires* and *Acts of Impatience*, these *Arts of Circumvention* and going beyond our *Adversaries*, these *deceitful Suggestions* and *Falsifications in Pleadings*, these *mischievous* and *vexatious ways*, this *Hatred*, *Envy*, *Evil-speakings* and *Surmises*, *Anger*, *Bitterness*, *Strife*, *Clamour*, *Revenge*, &c. which are so ordinarily the Concomitants of Judicial Causes, most unlawful and forbidden things ; so that

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vvhensoever vve have any Suits depending, vve sin in them, if any of these intrude and mix vvith them. A Judicial Controversie that is begun upon a Justifiable Ground, vvill not be innocent if 'tis carried on by so unjustifiable a management. And therefore to clear our Consciences in all Legal Tryals, vve must take care, not only that, after all *other* means of righting our selves have fail'd, the Suit be Commenced for a *thing of weight*, vvhich is a *justifiable Ground*; but also that it be pursued in all this *Justice, Charity, and Peace*, vvhich makes a *justifiable management*. For 'tis not enough that the Cause be good, unless the manner of maintaining it be good too.

This, I must confess, is an hard point, because in managing a Suit we are in the way of so many sins, and meet at every turn with strong Temptations, which must needs very much endanger us. For all the way these sins lye before us; so that unless we have a constant care, we shall step into them. They generally serve our ends, and set on the cause; so that we are still under a Temptation to them. And, what through our own Interest and the desire of Conquest, what through the opposition that is made, unless we are very Circumspect, our Passions will

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will be engaged; and then, more or less, we shall be hurried into the Commission of them. So that if no Suit be innocent where the Ground is good, except all these sins be avoided in the management; it will be a very hard thing, may some say, to sue innocently, and appeal to Courts at all.

This, indeed, is very true, and I am ready to confess so too. For though some *even-temper'd* men, who are endow'd not only with great *goodness*, but also with great *Discretion* and *Government of themselves*, may do it with some ease, and not find it *very difficult*; yet are those men very few in Number, who are so well set out, and qualified for it. But ordinarily it is a very difficult task, and there is great danger of offending God attending it. For I think there is hardly any thing that shews more the *Conduct* and *Goodness* of a man, than to be able to keep innocent whilst he is put upon contending, and so to manage a *Suit*, or other *Contest*, as that, when he has done, his own Conscience shall have no cause, to *accuse* or *condemn* him for it. But then the effect of this can be nothing else, but that men be very *slow* in coming to it, and very *Circumspect* in all they do, when in a thing of weight, after other means have been  
tried

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tryed in vain, they cannot avoid it. It must make them *slow* in coming to it, I say. And this, besides its quitting them of the *hazard*, I will, I believe, make also for their *ease*: for they will generally find less difficulty in *bearing Loss*, than in *keeping innocent*, whilst they seek *Judicially to repair it*. But when the thing is of so great weight, that a Suit cannot well be avoided; it must make them very Circumspect and Watchful over themselves all the time it is going on, lest they incur any of these sins in pursuit of it. The greatness of their Care must answer to the greatness of the Danger, so that they must resolve to set a strict Guard upon themselves in suing, or else not venture to being any Suit at all.

And thus it appears, that although in *itself* a Suit at Law be an innocent thing, yet when 'tis either begun upon an *unjustifiable Ground*, or carried on by a *sinful management*, it is not innocent, but defiles the Conscience of a Christian. It is our *sin*, and we must account for it, when we seek *Revenge* by it, or *Reparation* of a thing so small as cannot bear it, or of a weighty matter by *delays of Justice*, *Falsifications*, *Vexatious Arts*, or any other Instances of *Injustice*, or *Uncharitableness*, which is a *sinful way of managing it*. When this is  
the

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the state of it, there is a great offence in it. And whilst that lasts, it deprives us of the *Favour of God*, and ought to exclude us from the Holy Sacrament. Whereas, were it free of *these*, there would be no hurt in it, nor any Cause at all why a good Soul should be hindered by it.

As for this Hindrance then, whereby Devout minds are oft-times withheld from coming to this Feast, *viz.* their *being engaged in a Law-Suit*; we see now at length what weight is to be laid upon it, and when indeed they ought to be hindered by it. For if there are *no Damages* to be expected in the Cause, but we sue only for *Revenge*; or if, when there are, they are so *small* as will not bear a Suit, but ought to be a matter of *Forgiveness*; or if, when the Loss is of that moment which would justify a Suit, we transgress any instances of *Justice* or *Charity* in managing the Process: our Suit is our sin, which will not be forgiven us 'till we shew *Repentance*. When 'tis unlawful upon the *unjustifiableness of the Ground*, we sin in it 'till we *put an end* to it; and when we upon some particular *Injustice*, or *Uncharitableness* in the way of management, we sin in it 'till *that particular* is *Corrected* and *Amended*. And so long as we are Impenitent in *either of these*, we are *unfit* for the Holy

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Holy Sacrament, since no man, who allows himself in any sin, is worthy to partake of it. But then we are equally unfit to *Pray*, or perform any other *Religious Service*, or *hope for the Forgiveness of our Sins and Eternal Happiness*; because, as I have formerly observ'd, *Justice, Peace and Charity*, and other Virtues, are equally necessary in all these Cases. If our Suit then is either upon an *unwarrantable Ground*, or sinful in the way of *management*; so long as this sin *lasts* and is unamended, we are *unworthy to Communicate*. But then that is not all, for so we are also to *Dye*, to *Pray*, or to have any *Spiritual Peace or Comfort*. And this is a state which no wise man will persist in for one moment, but, whensoever he lays it to Heart, forthwith Repent and get out of it: and when once that is done, this Hindrance is removed, and he may be welcome to Feast with Christ. But if the Suit is innocent in both these Respects, and none of *these sins* adhere to it; if there is a *weighty Loss* to be repaired, or a *weighty Right* to be got by it; and we are in all Points *Just, Charitable, and Peaceable* in looking after it; or, when we fail in any instance, do in that, as in all other slips of our *daily Converse*, watch better the next time, and *immediately Repent* of it: then has a Suit *no offence*

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to God, nor any hurt at all in it; and so un-  
fits us not for *any good* thing, and then  
surely not for the *Blessed Sacrament*. When  
this is our Case, a Tryal at Law depend-  
ing need no more hinder us from Commu-  
nicating, than from any other business. So  
that if there is nothing else to discourage  
us, we may safely come to the Lords Ta-  
ble, and expect to be kindly entertain'd  
by him when we do.

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C H A P.



## C H A P. V.

*Of want of Charity.*

## The Contents.

*A Seventh Hindrance, is, because others are not in Charity with them, so that they are afraid they want that Peace, which is required to it. As for other mens uncharitablenesss, it is their sin, and so unfits them; but not being ours, it unfits us not for Receiving. If that ought to exclude any from the Sacrament, it had excluded Christ and his Apostles, and the Primitive Christians, since none had ever such implacable Enemies as they had. Care to be taken that their Enmity be not continued through our Fault; so that if we have given just occasion, we must endeavour a Reconciliation; and if we gave none, be careful not to hate them again. An Eighth Hindrance, is, because 'tis a Presumption in us to come to it, and therefore an humble man ought in all modesty to abstain from it. But, 1. 'Tis no Presumption to come when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden. 2. 'Tis a very  
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great Presumption to stay away, and leave it undone. 3. If the height of Privilege, and Honour in it, be sufficient to make an humble man refuse the Communion; it will also carry him to renounce the whole Christian Profession. A Ninth Hindrance, is, because many good People are seldom or never seen at it, so that they have good Company, and may be good too, if they abstain from it. But, 1. In enquiring after our own Duty, we are not to ask whether others practise it, but whether Christ has any where enjoyn'd it. 2. If any Good People keep from the Sacrament, that is no part of their Goodness, so that therein they are not to be imitated. 3. Though they might be acceptably Good, whilst through innocent Scruples, and honest Ignorance they were afraid to come to it: Yet will it be a very great Fault even in them to Neglect it after they are better informed, which will not be forgiven, but upon their Amendment of it.

A Seventh Hindrance, which keeps back several Persons from the Holy Sacrament, is, because, although they be with others, yet others are not in Charity with them; and therefore they are afraid they want that Peace which is required to it.

Now

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Now if this ought to hinder them from the *Communion*, it ought equally to be their hindrance from *Prayers*, and all *Devotion*; since there is the same necessity, as

I have noted, of *Peace* and

\* Mat. 5. 23, 24. \* *Reconciliation* with our Brethren, in all of them.

But if this be really their Case, it need not hinder them. For if *other* men will hate us, do what we can, that is our *unhappiness* indeed, whilst we suffer under it: But it is not our *Fault*, nor renders us ever the worse in the eyes of Almighty God, since we have done nothing to *deserve*, nor is it in our Power to *help* it. God commands us to *Love our Enemies*; so that if we *hate* them we sin, and are justly kept back by our *own uncharitableness*. But he no where Commands us to *make our Enemies Love us*; so that if after all they will still bear Enmity towards us, that is only *their own Sin*, and therefore whatever it do with *them*, ought not in any Reason to be *our hindrance*.

And indeed if it ought, it would much more have hindered our Saviour *Christ* and his *Apostles* from Communicating, than now it can any *other* Persons; because none of those who stick at this Impediment, have any Enemies so bitter and implacable, as *they* found *theirs*. For the

*Jews*

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*Jews* hated him so far as to seek his *Life*, and at last in most barbarous sort obtain'd their Purpose. And he tells his *Disciples*, that the time was coming, when *every one* that kill'd them would think that therein he approved himself a Friend of Religion, and did God good Service, Joh. 16. 2. And this they all found by sad Experience, being accounted, as St. Paul says, *the very filth of the World, and the off-scourging of all things, i. e.* Nuisances as necessary to be swept away, as Dirt out of the Streets, 1 Cor. 4. 13. and accordingly being Persecuted in every place, till they had laid down their Lives for Christ's sake, and the Gospels. Thus were they reputed as *Publick Enemies* of all Countries, and hated of all men as the vilest Miscreants, that breath'd Infection wheresoever they came, and were the common Pest of all Places. And therefore if this be a sufficient Hindrance from the Communion, that *others hate us*, it should always have hindred, and utterly Excommunicated our Saviour Christ, and his *Apostles*, and all the *Christians* of the *first Times*, who, being always implacably hated, and most spitefully Persecuted, upon this account ought always to have abstain'd, and not to have receiv'd at all.

As for *others* being out of Charity with us there-

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therefore, that ought not to be *our* hindrance. But then we must take care that *we be in Charity with them*, and that their Hatred to us be not continued through any *Offence* or *Fault* of ours, else shall we be kept back through our own *Uncharitableness*. So that if we gave *just Cause* for their Wrathful Indignation, by *confessing our Fault*, and *repairing the Wrong*, we must endeavour a *Reconciliation*; or if we gave *none*, we must still be careful to *love them*, though they will not be perswaded to *love us*, and not harbour any *Enmity* or *Hatred* towards them again.

*If we have given just Cause*, I say, for their *wrathful Indignation*, through any *Injuries*, or *Offences* we have offered them, by *confessing our Fault*, and *repairing the wrong*, we must endeavour a *Reconciliation*. When we have done any thing whereat they are displeased, if they have *no Reason* for it, we must seek to inform them better, and rectifie their mistakes about it: But if they *have*, we must give them all proper satisfaction, and make a just amends for it. If we have given them *just Offence*, by *Affronts*, or *contumelious Carriage*; we must *acknowledge our Fault*, and *promise to do so no more*, and *ask Forgiveness*: And if we have *injuriously prejudiced* them in their *Estates*, *Good Names*, or *Business*; we must,

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as far as in us lies, *repair the loss* which they have sustain'd by us. And this God expects from us, before he will accept our *Offerings*, or be pleas'd with us in any *Ordinance*. *When thou bringest thy Gift to the Altar*, says our Saviour, *and there rememberest that thy Brother hath fought against thee*, go thy way, *first be reconciled to thy Brother*, and then come and offer thy Gift, Mat. 5. 23, 24.

But if they hate us, when we gave no Cause for it, nor have in any wise deserv'd it of them; yet must we still be careful to Love them, though they will not be perswaded to Love us, and not harbour any *Enmity*, or *Hatred* towards them again.

We must Love them, I say; not with that Degree of Love, indeed, wherewith we embrace our particular Friends, and those who have *beetter deserved of us*; but with that which we owe in *common to all Persons*. We must have so much affection for them, as will restrain us both from *doing*, and *speaking Evil* of them, and make us exercise all that *Justice*, and shew that *kindness* towards them in all Conversation, which is due to the promiscuous multitude of other men. For all these Instances of *general Charity*, are due to our very *Enemies*, as I have already shewn. So that when they are unmoveable in their *Hatred*, and persist in their malicious ways; yet

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yet must not that *provoke* us into any spiteful Returns, or chafe us into any hard Speeches, or injurious or unkind Carriage towards them again.

And thus it appears what is to be thought of this Hindrance, *viz.* the implacableness of some ill Neighbours, and their unconquerable Enmity against us. For when 'tis our hard hap to fall among such Persons, we must still *Love them*, and be at Peace with them in our own minds, though we never gave them any just Cause to be angered; and if we did, by confessing of our Fault, and repairing of the Wrong which makes the Breach, we must endeavour after a *Reconcilement*. But if after all, they are obstinate, and unmoveable in their hatred; that is *their own Fault*, which may justly hinder them, but ought not to detain us from the Holy Sacrament. For although God require a worthy Receiver to *Love his Enemies*, yet he no where requires him to *make his Enemies Love him*; and if no Person could Communicate worthily, whilst he has an *unreconciled Enemy*, our Blessed Saviour, and his Apostles, and all the first and best Christians, had been most unworthy, and could never have received at all.

An *Eighth* Hindrance, which holds back several Persons from coming to this Feast, notwithstanding

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notwithstanding it is so much both their Duty and their Priviledge, as I have shewn, to joyn in it; is, because it looks like an high Presumption in us to Feast on the Body and Blood of our Sovereign Lord, and to eat at the same Table with Almighty God; and therefore an humble man ought in all modesty to abstain from it.

I have already considered that unworthiness, which respects the manner of receiving, and answered those who urge that they are unworthy to Communicate, meaning thereby, that they want that height of Vir-  
tuous and Devout Tempers, which they apprehend God has required to it. But this unworthiness is not from the want of such due Dispositions, or from the Indecency in the unsuitable Receiving, but from the inaccessible height and greatness of the thing, which they think is so far above us, that fit, or unfit, no Person is worthy of it, but that 'tis boldness and presumption in any one to touch things so surpassing high and excellent. But to satisfy these Persons, who think it a piece of Arrogance and Presumption to come to this Holy Sacrament, when their Lord not only Requests, but Commands it, I shall suggest to them these three things.

1. It is no Presumption to come when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden. But,

2. It



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2. It is a very great boldness and presumption to stay away, and leave it undone.

3. If the height of Priviledge and Honour in it, be sufficient to make an humble, modest man refuse the Communion; it will not rest in that alone, but carry him on equally to renounce the whole Christian Profession.

1. I say, It is no Presumption to come to this Feast when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden. If we should intrude of our own accord, and come uninvited, we might be too bold, indeed, and very rudely Arrogant. But when we are particularly sent to, and called to come, especially if there be, as in this Case there is, great earnestness and importunity in the Invitation; it is the part of an humble man to comply with it, and he is not Guilty of the least shew of Arrogance and Ill-breeding in so doing. There is Civility shewn sometimes in accepting, as well as in offering Kindnesses, and it is Good manners to receive what God would have us, yea, indeed, to accept any thing from the hand of our Betters. So that in all Civility and inoffensive Carriage we were bound to come, had we nothing more than a Friendly Invitation. But besides that, God has expressly enjoyn'd, as I have observ'd, and peremptorily required it of us: So that now we must approach to it, not only out of Civility and Respect,

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*Respect*, but also out of *Obedience* to his Commandment. And *true Humility* is no hindrance, but the greatest furtherance in the world to such a Service, it being not the part of a *presumptuous*, but a *truly humble* man to do what he is bidden, and to please those whom he is bound in Duty to Obey.

It is no Presumption then to come to the Sacrament when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden. But,

2. *It is a very great Boldness and Presumption to stay away, and leave it undone.* He is no *proud* man who accepts a Kindness when 'tis offer'd, and he is earnestly invited to it: But he may shew *Pride* and *Haughtiness* enough, who *slights* and *despises* it. And he is no *bold* man, that doth what he is *Commanded*; but he shews *Boldness*, and *presumes*, indeed, that dare venture to *Transgress* it. There are no men so bold and presumptuous with God, as they who will act what he forbids, and refuse to do what he enjoyns them. So that it is truly an high Presumption to stay away, when he has expressly charged us, both upon our Duty and our *Love* for him, to joyn in the Communion.

3. *If the height of Priviledge and Honour in it, be sufficient to make an humble modest man refuse the Communion; since his whole Religion*

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*Religion* is made up of *high Characters* and *honourable Priviledges*, it will not rest in that alone, but carry him on equally to renounce the whole *Christian Profession*. What thinks he of *Holy Baptism*, wherein he was wade not only a *Servant*, but a *Child of God*; not only a *Friend*, but a *Brother* and *Joint-Heir with Christ*; and an *Inheritor*, not of a *small Estate*, but of a *Kingdom*, and that no *cheap* or *fading* one neither, but of the *Kingdom of Heaven*; What thinks he of the *happines*s of another *Life*, wherein God will fill us with *unutterable Joys*, and adorn us with *Crowns* and *Scepters*, and

take us, as our Saviour  
 \* Rev. 3. 21.      \* says, into the same  
*Throne with him self?*

What thinks he of his *Redemption* being purchased at so dear a rate, which could not be obtain'd, unless *Jesus Christ*, God's only *Son*, would come down from *Heaven*, and be made man, and pay down his own *Life* for it? Are not all these as superlatively high things, and as much above us, as *Feasting with God in the Communion* is? Is it not as great a *Presumption* in us to become God's *Sons*, and to inherit *Kingdoms*, and to hope for *Crowns*, and *Thrones*, and *Scepters*; as it is to sit down with him as his *Guests*, and to eat and drink in his own *Presence*? Is it not as high an *Arro-*

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regance to admit that Christ should die for us, as it is to come and remember his Death, and to accept those Benefits which are there- by convey'd to us? All these things are infinitely above us, and we could not have had the Face to have asked any of them, if God had referr'd it to our own choice, and bid us name what we would for our own selves. But yet, since in his un- bounded Love and Kindness he has freely offer'd them, we must have the good man- ners in all forward Thankfulness and Humi- lity to accept, and not out of a shew of Modesty, and unreasonable Self-abasement re- fuse them. When God calls us then to Feast with him in the Holy Sacrament, and to feed upon the Body and Blood of our dear Lord; we must not hold back because there is so eminent a Privilege, and high an Honour in it. For we receive no greater Favour, or higher Honour therein, than in being made God's Children, as we were in Holy Baptism; than in Christ's Incarnati- on, Death and Suffering; than in the offers of Crowns, and Thrones, and the other Glo- rious Privileges of our Religion. So that if the Fear of receiving too much honour from God, ought to put us by the Communion; it ought as much to the full to put us by our Baptism, and the whole Christian Profession.

As for those then who are hindred from

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the Sacrament, by the fear of being too *Bold* and *Presumptuous* with God in coming to a *Feast* which has such *height of Priviledge* and *Honour* in it : they are hindred without any just Ground, and kept back by what they ought not. For it is no *Presumption*, but the part of *humble* men, to come when they are call'd, and to do what they are bidden; but it is a *very great Boldness* and *Presumption* to stay away, and leave it undone; and if the *height of Priviledge* and *Honour* in it, be sufficient to keep back *humble Souls* from this *Feast*, it must also keep them back from *Baptism*, wherein the same Honours are conferr'd which are in it, and carry them in the same guise of *Moderesty* to refuse *Christ's dying* for them, and all the *hopes of Heaven*, and, in a word, their *Christianity* and *whole Religion* too.

A *Ninth Plea*, whereby several Persons are wont to excuse their not coming to the Sacrament, is because *many Good People* are seldom or never seen at it, and therefore they may be good too, and have good Company, if they keep away from it.

Now, as for those who urge this in excuse, I would desire them to consider, that when they are enquiring after their *own Duty* in any matter, it is no right way to ask whether *others Practise* it, but whether their *Lord* has any where *Commanded* it.

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it. For mens Practics is not always fully answerable to their *own* Duty, and so is a very false Rule whereby to judge of *ours*. All Persons have their Faults, and though no Good man can continue in any *wilful* ones, yet will even they be subject to several *Ignorant slips*, and *unadvised miscarriages*. But when at any time they either wilfully break any Commandment, or ignorantly mistake it; that is no warranty for us to do so likewise. So that if we would truly understand whether we are bound to Communicate, our way is not to enquire whether others do it, but whether our Lord has any where enjoyn'd it; for if he has, we are certainly oblig'd to it, whethers others observe it or no.

But in more Particular Answer to this Plea, I must tell them,

1<sup>st</sup>, That if any good People keep away from the Sacrament, that is no part of their goodness, but their blemish, so that therein they are not to be imitated.

2<sup>ly</sup>, That although they might be acceptably good, whilst through innocent Scruples, and honest Ignorance, they were afraid to come to it; yet will it be a very great Fault even in them to Neglect it, after they are better inform'd, which will not be forgiven, but upon their amendment of it.

1. I say, If any Good People keep away  
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*from the Sacrament, that is no part of their Goodness but their Blemish, so that therein they are not to be imitated. For we have God's express Command to come, and that we cannot slight without being disobedient, and guilty of a plain Transgression. We are call'd therein to shew our selves thankfully mindful of our Blessed Saviour's Death, and of all that he has done; and this Call we cannot deny, without proclaiming our selves most shamefully unthankful towards him. We are summon'd in to profess Repentance and Amendment of all our sins, and this we cannot honestly decline if really we are resolv'd to leave them. We are invited to declare our selves at Peace with all the Members of our Lord, and reconciled to all the Christian World; and this Invitation no man can fairly refuse, who in very deed is in Charity, and an hearty Friend to them. God's Law pre-emptorily enjoyns, and the things therein imply'd straitly oblige us to partake of the Sacrament when an opportunity is offer'd; so that every man, who makes Conscience of his Duty, and regards Obedience to his Lord, must be careful to joyn in it. And it is the Greatest means of a good Life, and Obligation to Amendment that can be prescribed; so that every one, who has a just care of his own Soul, and is earnestly*

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neftly defirous of Virtuous Improvements, will feek to be admitted to it. A Good man's Duty binds him, and the care of his own Soul engages him to Communicate; fo that there is neither *Virtue* nor *Prudence* fhewn in ftaying away, nor is it any part of Goodnefs to Neglect it. And therefore if any Perfons otherwife Good are feldom feen at the Bleffed Sacrament, that is no part of their Goodnefs, but their Fault, fo that therein they are not to be imitated.

2. *Though they might be acceptably Good, whilft through innocent Scruples, and honeft Ignorance, they were afraid to receive it; yet will it be a very great Fault even in them to Neglect it after they are better inform'd, which will not be forgiven, but upon their Amendment of it.*

A Good Man cannot indulge himfelf in any known Sin; for he ceafes to be good and acceptable to God, if he perfifts in any of them, after he is plainly told of them, and his Duty is evidently fet before him. *The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againft all unrighteoufnefs*, faith St. Paul, Rom. 1. 18. And he that breaks one Law, faith St. James, is guilty of all, i. e. of that Eternal Punifhment which is denounced, not barely to fome one, but to all, Jam. 2. 10. So that when once this Great Duty of coming to the Sacra-



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ment is clearly laid out, and his Conscience is inlightned and possessed with a sense of it; he can be no Good man, who wilfully holds off still, and refrains to come to it. Whilst he was perplex'd with *Doubts* about it, indeed, and either through the *loose* Discourses of some, thought himself *not oblig'd*; or, through the *unreasonable Rigour* and *Severity* of others, after all his Repentance, and full purposes of Amendment, thought himself still *unprepared* to come to it: for the pitiable-ness of his *Ignorance*, and *unwill'd* mistake, so long as they lasted, his Neglect of it may be excused and connived at. But if after all his *Doubts* have been *resolv'd*, and things have been set in a *clearer Light*, he continue still to slight it; then he is Guilty of a very *great Fault*, which will not be *forgiven* till he *Repents* and *Amends* it. *To him that knows to do Good, and doth it not, say St. James, to him 'tis Sin, Jam. 4. 17.* And when any willful sin stands charg'd on our account, it will not be struck off till we forsake and turn away from it. For to all such Sinners, God's Declaration is this, *Except ye Repent, you shall all perish, Luc. 13. 3.*

As for those then who urge this in excuse for their not coming to the Sacrament, because *several Good People are sel-*  
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*dom, or never seen at it : My Answer to them in sum is this. In judging what is our Duty, we must not take our measures from other mens Practice, but from our Blessed Lord's Commandments ; since, if they disobey any Precept, that is no excuse to us, nor gives us any warranty for companies sake to disobey likewise. And as for the Sacrament in particular, if any Good People keep away from it, that is no part of their Goodness ; so that therein they are not to be imitated. Nay, if they continue in this Neglect, after their Consciences are rightly instructed, and informed about it ; they cease to be Good, and commit a Damning Fault, and Impenitent continuance in any one known sin putting any Person out of a gracious State. Whilst they were held back purely by Doubts and Scruples, and want of Knowledge without their own Fault ; their Omission was fit to be commended at, and they might continue acceptably Good notwithstanding it. But if still they persist in it, after they know more, and are better instructed ; they are Guilty of a very criminal Neglect, which will not be passed over, but upon the same Terms as all other known sins are, i. e. their Repentance of it. If they stay away out of Ignorance and Mistake, all they can expect, is, to be pitied, but not to be*

Commended for it; and if out of willfulness after their Conscience has been set right, they will be severely punish'd unless they are not reclaimed from it. So that no man must ever hope to justify himself in refraining the Lord's Table, because he has good Company, and knows of several others, whom he takes to be very Holy Persons, that are wont to refrain it too.

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C H A P. VI.

*Of two more Hindrances.*

The Contents.

*A Tenth Hindrance is, because others who are unworthy of it, are admitted to join in it. But, 1. They ought not to be forward in judging others unworthy, lest they be mistaken in it. 2. When some, who, as they have great cause to think, are unworthy, do receive, yet ought not that to hinder them from joyning in it. For if it be a sufficient Hindrance, it had equally hindred our Saviour Christ, and the Primitive Christians. It ought not only to hinder us from the Communion, but also from being Members of the Christian Church and Profession; but 'tis plainly of no force for either of them, since one man shoud not bear anothers, but every man his own burden. St. Pauls forbidding to eat with Fornicators, &c. 1 Cor. 5. 11. shown not to speak against mixt Communion. 3. If still any are really offended at the Communion of the Wicked, upon complaint made in the Congregation, they are to be suspended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament.*

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1. *Kneeling is no unsuitable Posture in receiving, so that if we were left at Liberty, we might have enough to justify our selves in making use of it.* 2. *It is appointed by our Governours, whom God Commands us to obey in all lawful Things; so that every Good man ought to observe it. But if it neither had Authority to injoyn, nor Reason to recommend it, but another Posture might be better used.* Yet, 3. *Since it may lawfully, though not so well, be used too, for the Sacraments sake, which is not otherwise to be had, we should at least comply with it. No Hindrance to this Compliance, because the Gesture of Kneeling is different from what our Saviour used. For so is sitting too, and therefore they and we are equally concerned to answer it. The Posture he used was no part of the Institution, so that the Institution is not broken when the Posture is altered. Neither it, nor any other, has any Command of God for it; so that none is necessary, but all are still indifferent. When a Posture, different from that at the first Institution, was introduced in Sacraments, our Saviour himself, and they too have submitted*

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mitted to it. Again, no hindrance to it from the fear of worshipping the Bread, or its being a Popish Rite. A conclusion of this point.

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But that they may not be kept back by this Hindrance, I shall observe to them these three things.

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### 384 *Of Hindrances that keep* Part III.

*Neighbours, either in word, or deed; upon complaint made in the Congregation, they are to be suspended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament.*

1. I say, *they ought not to be forward in judging any others unworthy to Communicate, lest they be mistaken in it.* For every Penitent Man, who is fully Resolved to leave all his Sins, is really worthy to receive the Sacrament: and whether the Person they think unworthy be so resolved or no, is very hard for them to judge, since no Man can see into anothers Heart, and only God and his own Soul are privy to it. When he comes to the Lord's Table, every Communicant professes to Repent, and promises to lead a New Life thenceforward: and when he solemnly declares he is thus resolved, 'tis hard for another Person, who cannot see into his Soul, to say he is not, but is still impenitent. Tho' all Good Men therefore may be free in judging of themselves, yet ought they to be very wary how they pass a Judgment on the unworthiness of others. They must not be forward to pronounce of it, because 'tis hard for them to know it; so that when they give Sentence against their Brethren in this point, 'tis venturiously done, and they are liable to be deceived in it.

2. *When*

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2. *When some others, who, as they have great cause to think, are unworthy, do Receive the Sacrament; yet ought not that to hinder them from joyning in it.* Our Business should not be to move Questions and Disputes about the preparedness of others, but to be careful duly to prepare ourselves; and when once we are fitly qualified for it, we ought to come whether they be so or no. Their unworthiness will have all its effect upon themselves, but will not hinder our acceptance, nor ought to put us by from doing both our Saviour, and our own Souls this Service.

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count he gives, says, *Judas went immediately out after he had receiv'd the Sop*, Joh. 13. 30. And a Sop dipped in the thick Sawce being part of the Paschal Supper, from his *going out immediately after the Receipt of the Sop*, some would presume he stay'd only to partake in the Passover, but arose and went out before Christ instituted his own Supper, which was not begun till the Passover was ended.

But in Answer to this, it may suffice to Note, that the Ground of this Conjecture is a mistake. For this *Supper*, mentioned by St. *John*, whereat he says *Judas* went out immediately after the Receipt of the Sop, was not the Paschal Supper. For, besides that, 'tis expressly said of St. *John's* Supper, that *the Devil made his entry into Judas after it was ended*, v. 2. 27; which could not therefore be the *Passover*, because, as St. *Luke* testifies, he had *entered into him* before the *Passover* was fully come, when it only *dinner'd*, Luc. 22. 1, 3. Besides this, I say, St. *John* says expressly of the Supper he mentions, that it it was *before the Feast of the Passover*, v. 1. And when, during that Supper our Lord bade *Judas* *dispatch what he had to do quickly*, v. 27. Some of the other Disciples took the meaning of that to be, as if he had bid him *buy what was needful against the Feast*,

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*Feast*, v. 29. ; which they could never have so understood, if they had then been making an end of the Paschal Feast, it being vain, indeed, at the end of a Feast, to think of making Provision for it. So that the Supper whereat *Judas* went out immediately after the Sop, and stay'd not to see the rest, was not the *Solemn Feast of the Passover*, which Jesus celebrated at *Jerusalem*; but some other ordinary Supper, and very probably that which St. *Matthew* speaks of, which he had at *Bethany*, in the house of *Simon the Leper*, two days before, *Mat.* 26. 2, 6, 7. But when the Passover came, he stay'd to the end of it, and of the Lord's Supper which followed it; Jesus plainly declaring, as I observed, that the hand of the Traytor was with him on the Table, after both the Bread and Wine, were blessed and distributed.

2. If the Company of unworthy Persons be a just impediment from the Communion, it ought to hinder us also from being Members of the Christian Church and Profession. For the Church it self is a mixt multitude of fit and unfit, of holy and unholy Persons. It is compared to a Net, wherein Fish of all sorts are caught, both good and bad, *Mat.* 13. 47, 48: to a Field, where both Wheat and Tares spring up, and wherein both must grow together till the Harvest,

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*vest*, v. 24, 25, 30. All Christians are not such as their Saviour Christ was, and such as their Religion requires they should be: and therefore if we refuse to share in any *holy thing* whilst some unworthy Persons pretend to it, and will not joyn in any *Act or State* wherein ill men Participate; we must not only shun the *Communion*, but cease also to be Members of the *Church*, or Profess the *Christian Religion*. Nay, I might add farther, since *all Communities* have some Corrupt Members, and in every Body of Men there are some Vicious, as well as Godly Persons; if we decline all Society and Fellowship which has ill Men to partake in it, we must not stop in avoiding the Communion, and leaping out of the Christian Church and Profession, but, if we run on so far as this Principle will lead us, become Out-Laws to *Families, Townships, Kingdoms*, yea, to all Mankind.

3. *One shall not bear anothers, but every Man his own Burthen; so that if not we, but only they are unworthy, we are safe, and may freely come, and they alone are debarr'd from Receiving.* God will not punish one Soul for anothers fault, or be angry at this, because that Person has deserv'd it. But every Man shall stand or fall by his own Work, and either be approved or rejected

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rejected as it prepares him for it. *Let every Man prove his own Work*, saith the Apostle, *for every Man shall bear his own Burthen*, Eph. 6. 4, 5. So that if we take care to come worthily ourselves, we shall be kindly treated and accepted by him, and not any ways prejudiced or frown'd upon, for the unworthiness and undue Preparation of other Men.

But against all this it may be objected, that this *eating in mixt Communion* is against the Rule of St. Paul, who forbids the Christians at *Corinth* to *keep company with Drunkards, Fornicators, Railers, &c.* or to *eat Bread with them*, 1 Cor 5. 11.

But in Answer to this it may be observed, that the *eating* there spoken of is not that of the *Communion* in the *Publick Assemblies*, but only that of *civil Conversation* at *Private Tables*. This was one Rule of Discipline in the First Times. For when the Authority of the established Guides, and the awfulness of Church-censures were insufficient to reduce Offenders in a Divided Church, the Apostles ordered all Private Christians to shun their company and acquaintance, till thereby they had shamed them out of their evil courses. Thus they dealt with misguided *Hereticks*. *If there come any unto you*, saith St. John, *and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into*

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*into your house, neither bid him God speed,*  
2 Joh. 10. According to which Rule,

\* *Ac sunt qui hoc ipsum (viz. Irenæum) commemorantam audiverint, Joannem Dominum Discipulum, cum ephesi ad Balneum missi, ac Cerinthum intus conspexissent, illotum Balneo exisse, atque his verbis usum fuisse, fugiamus ne Balneum rual, quod intus sit Cerinthus veritatis Hostis. Quin ipse quoque Polycarpus, cum Marcion aliquando in ipsius conspectum venisset, ac dixisset, agnosce nos; respondit, agnosco Primigenitum Sathanæ. Tanto studio Apostoli, atque ipsorum Discipuli cavebant, ne cum quoquam eorum, qui veritatem adulterabant, vel sermonis commercium inirent.* *Gren. adv. Hæres. l. 3. c. 3.*

when he went into the  
\* *Bath at Ephesus, and found the Heretick Cerinthus there, he leaped out again unwashed, saying, Let us fly from this Enemy of the Truth, lest by staying with him, the Bath fall down upon us, as Irenæus says, several then alive could testify from the mouth of Polycarp, one of his Disciples. And in like manner Polycarp, himself, when the Heretick Marcion desired him to take Notice of him, and Salute him; replied, he would take Notice of him no otherwise, than as of Satan's First-born. So studiously cautious says Irenæus, were the Apostles, and their Disciples, of entering into any Discourse or Converse with Heretical Depravours of the Truth: thus also they dealt with stubborn and contumacious Persons,*

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Persons, who despised Church Orders, and the establishments of their Spiritual Governors. *If any man obey not our word by this Epistle, Note that man, and have no company with him,* says St. Paul, *that he may be ashamed,* 2 Theff. 3. 14. And thus they dealt, lastly, with scandalous and noted Evil Livers. *We command you, Brethren, in the Name of Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every Brother that walketh disorderly, and not according to the Tradition he received of us,* 2 Theff. 3. 6. And so again to the Corinthians in this place. *If any man that is call'd a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, I write unto you not to keep company with such an one, no not to eat with him, i. e. Exclude him from all Familiarity and civil Conversation,* 1 Cor. 5. 11.

Indeed, as for this withdrawing of Acquaintance, Converse and Trading (which was a kind of civil excommunication) from such Offenders, it was no lasting constant thing, but wore out by degrees, and was much laid aside in time. Whilst it was a prudent rule of Discipline, and fit to shame and reclaim Heretical or vicious Men, it was used towards them. And this it was fit to do whilst Christians lived among Heathens, for then they would

would desire to keep in with their own Party for protection: and whilst the Hereticks and scandalous Livers were few in Number, for then they could not have a considerable Party of their own to abet and support them. And whilst Religion was in this state, which rendred it a prudent Course, as it was most especially in the Apostles Days, this, as I have shewn, was a comon *Rule & Practice* of the Church. But when once Christianity became the common Religion, and both Heresies and Vices would have Great Names, and Numbers enough to abet and support themselves, if all the Orthodox and Godly should decline them: then this renouncing of their converse would have served to combine the vicious and erroneous into united Numbers, and put them out of the way of Good counsels and opportunities of Repentance, and every where extremely endanger'd and laid waste the civil Peace. So that the state of things being alter'd, which made it prudent and practible, this Rule vanished by degrees, and was laid aside. It lived longer in the Zeal of some *particular* Persons, who withdrew themselves from all converse of vicious Livers and Heretical Opiniators; whereof *Monica* the Mother of St. *Austin* is an instance in that Age, who,

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as he himself testifies,  
† *refused to Dyet with him  
her own Son, when he was  
perverted to the Heresie of  
the Manichees.* But as for  
the *Body* of Christians,  
they left it off, this way  
of private Christians re-  
nouncing all civill *converse*  
*with such* as were not pub-  
lickly Excommunicated  
& cut off by Church-cen-  
sures, being laid aside,  
as St. *Chrysostom* relates, before his Time.  
And so it continues still, not only in our  
Church, but in all other Sects and Parties  
that are among us. For whatever some  
may do upon *Discretionary* Grounds, to  
encourage and maintain their own Party:  
yet none of them think themselves obli-  
ged in *Conscience* to confine their conver-  
sation or dealing to their own Church,  
and neither be acquainted nor Trade with  
Men of other Opinions, but do all among  
themselves.

Besides all this, for a fuller clearing of this  
place, I add farther, that when this Rule  
of *not keeping company with open Offenders*  
was most of all observ'd, as it was in the  
*Apostles* Days, yet even then did it admit  
of many limitations, and it was still al-  
low'd

† Nam unde il-  
lud somnium, quo  
eam consolatus es,  
ut vivere me se-  
cum crederet, &  
habere mecum e-  
andem mensam in  
Domo, quod nolle  
caperat, averfans  
& detestans blas-  
phemias erroris  
mei. *August. Con-  
fess.* l. 3. c. 11.



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low'd to company with them in several cases.

It forbid not Private Christians joyn-  
ing with them in *Publick Offices of Religion*.  
For *Prayers* and *Sacraments* are a Duty we  
all owe to Almighty God, which we are  
indispensably bound to perform, and  
must not desert because ill Men intrude  
to do the same. And thus our *Saviour*  
kept company, and eat with *Judas* him-  
self; and so did the Church of *Corinth*,  
and other Churches with other Offenders,  
in those very Days, as I have shewn,  
when this Rule was given.

It forbid not joyning with them in the  
*Duties of any Relation*. For notwithstanding  
this Rule, *Children* were to honour and  
obey their *Parents* and *Wives*, their *Hus-*  
*bands* and *Servants* their *Masters*, and *Sub-*  
*jects* their *Princes*, and all Men to shew  
*Gratitude* to their *Benefactors*, whatever  
ill Life they lead, or Heretical Opinion  
they had imbib'd. Tho' a believieg Wo-  
man have an unbelieving Husband, says  
St. Paul, let her not leave him, 1 Cor. 7.

\* Col. 3. 20.

† Tit. 3. 1.

\* 1 Pet. 2. 18.

12, 13. And he bids

\* *Children* to obey their  
*Parents* in all things; and

† *Subjects* to obey *Magi-*  
*strats*; and \* *Servants* to  
be subject to their own *Ma-*  
*sters*,

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sters, at a time when they lived under Heathens.

It forbid not any Conversation, which sought to do them good, and endeavour'd their amendment. For at the same time St. Paul enjoyns this withdrawing from them, he directs still to admonish them for their Reformation. Note that man, and have no company with him; yet count him not as an enemy, to be looked no longer after, but admonish him as a Brother, 2 Thess. 3. 14, 15.

Nay, lastly, It forbid not Good Christians companying with them, when it was highly convenient and advantageous to themselves, but allowed it, as need required, in the way of Trade and Livelihood. This St. Paul thought a sufficient Reason why this Rule should not keep them from dealing and conversing with Gentile Sinners. When I wrote to you, says he, not to company with Fornicators, I meant, not to forbid your companying altogether with the Fornicators of this world, for then must ye needs go out of the world, and could not drive any Trade or Business, your Heathen Neighbours, among whom your concerns lye, generally being such, 1 Cor. 5. 9, 10. And where the same Detriment would have ensued by forbearing to deal with offending Christians, in reason and equity

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there would have been the same Allowance. The Rule was not given to punish the Innocent, but to reclaim the Guilty; so that in any case, where the Good were like to be oppressed by it, it would have been equitably relaxed, and not have obliged at all.

As for this place of *St. Paul* then, it makes nothing against *mixt Communion*, nor forbids us to receive in company with an ill Man. For it speaks not of companying and eating in the Sacrament, but only in civil Conversation. There, indeed, while the Church was young, it did oblige for a a time: tho' that time is long since gone, this course being vanished long agoe, as the state of Religion alter'd which made it prudent, and being now universally Neglected over all the World. And even during that time wherein it did oblige, it was with many exceptions. For it allow'd, as of joyning with them in Divine Offices, and the Dutys of any Particular Relations: so also of all such Conversation, as either sought to reclaim them, or was either necessary or highly advantageous to the sound Christians themselves. But as for Religion, it neither requires, nor authorizes any Persons to withdraw from any Offices of it, when ill Men joyn in them. It is *Church-*

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Governors that must keep them away from these by *Publick Censures*, and no part of the care of *Private Christians* to prevent meeting them there, by *absenting of themselves*. So that at Prayers and Sacraments the Good must be sure to shew themselves, whatever *Offenders* happen to be there too.

But if the Presence of such Persons would Defile our *Ordinary Converse*, would it not much more Defile *Divine Offices*, may some say, and stain our Communion in *Peayers* and *Sacraments*, which, being more Sublime and Sacred things, must needs be more Prophaned by the company of such Persons? To which I answer, that if their very Presence did Defile our Converse, or our Private Tables, so indeed it would. But the reason why Private Christians are to withdraw themselves from such Offenders, is not lest they should be Defiled by being in the same place with them, for that they are not, except they either joyn in their Sins, or learn some ill from them: but that they may reclaim the Offenders by their with-drawing. This with-holding Converse is a Rule of Discipline, which was prescribed for the sake of those Sinners they withdraw from, and was intended, as *St. Paul* says, *to shame them*, 2 Thess. 3. 14. And this might be en-  
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joyn'd in civil Conversation, because that is a Free thing; but not in Prayers and Sacraments, because they are necessary Duties, and no Man, when he is call'd to them, is at liberty to absent from them.

Thus ought not the sight of some unworthy Persons joyning in it, to strike any Terror into us, or drive us from the Holy Sacrament. There is a great *Sin*, and a great *Danger* in unworthy Receiving, which is enough to discourage all impenitent unworthy Men from offering at it: and where the *Censures* of the *Church* are held in any esteem, and are likely to gain their end through the Awe and Reverence Men have for them, the *Governors of the Church*, both out of Compassion for their Souls, and concern for the honour of this Ordinance, may see cause to remove them from it. But if neither the *Danger of the thing*, nor any *Affectionate and fair warning*, nor any *enabled Hand of Discipline*, when it is become impotent, and of small account, through the *Number of Offenders*, who are too strong for it, or through the *multitude of Schisms and Divisions*, one Party entertaining what another excludes, which mightily impairs the Force of it. If notwithstanding all these, I say, unworthy Men will still press in, and presume to Commu-

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Communicate ; yet is their unworthiness only to *themselves*, but as for *others*, who are truly worthy, they have no hurt at all by it. They shall not suffer for their Brethrens sins, nor are incapacitated by their unfitnesses ; so that whilst they have no unworthiness in their own Souls, they may approach the Holy Table, and cheerfully receive still.

But yet farther.

3. *If any should be really scandalized at the Presence of those who are notoriously wicked, or who have done any wrong to their Neighbours, either in word, or deed ; upon Complaint made in the Congregation, they are to be suspended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament. For this Care our Church has taken in this Case, to prevent all those, whose wickedness gives publick Scandal and Offence, from sharing in these Holy Mysteries. If any Communicant, says the Rubrick before the Communion-Service, be an open and notorious evil Liver, or have done any wrong to his Neighbour by word, or deed, so that the Congregation be thereby offended ; the Curate having knowledge thereof, shall call him, and advertize him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's Table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly Repented and Amended his former naughty Life, that*

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*the Congregation may thereby be satisfied, which before were offended; and that he hath recompenced the Parties to whom he hath done wrong, or at least declare himself to be in full purpose so to do as soon as conveniently he may.*

As for those then who are kept back from this Feast, because they see *some unworthy Persons* are admitted to it, my Answer to them in brief is this: that They ought not to be forward in judging any others unworthy, because 'tis hard for them to know it, and they are liable to be mistaken in it. And that when they have great and plain cause to conclude others unworthy, yet ought not that in any wise to hinder them, who are truly worthy, from coming to it. For if the Company of unworthy Receivers were a just Hindrance, it would have hindred our *Blessed Lord*, and the *Primitive Christians*, since it lay in *their* way, as well as now it doth in *ours*; it would not rest in with-holding us from the *Communion*, but serve equally to put us by from being *Members* of the Church, or professing the *Christian Religion*; but it is plainly of no force for either of them, since one Man shall not bear *another's*, but every one his own Burthen. But if still any are really scandalized by the Company of such as are notoriously wicked, that offence may be removed when they have a mind  
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to it; for upon complaint made, those unworthy Persons are to be suspended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament.

An Eleventh Hindrance, whereby several Persons are kept back from joyning in this Feast, is the *Gesture which is required to it*. For though right-gladly they would be admitted to the Sacrament, yet they dare not Kneel, as the Church appoints all Men to do when they Receive it.

Now when any Persons refuse the Holy Sacrament upon this account, they have no sufficient Plea, or just Excuse from it. When our Lord shall ask them at the last Day, *why they did not Communicate according to his appointment?* It will be but a bad Answer in them to say, in was because they could not sit, or use some other Posture which they thought convenient. For since he has only required the *Thing*, but has no where enjoin'd the *Gesture* we are to Receive in; he will have just Reason to reply to such Men, That then it seems they would not do what he bid them, unless at the same time they could do that also which he had *not bidden*, nor perform his will, unless withall they should be allowed to have their *own*; which justly merits a severe Reproof, but is far from being a matter of Commendation.

But that they may not inexcusably Neg-



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lect so great a Commandment, upon so weak a Reason for it, I would offer to their Consideration these three things.

1. *Kneeling is no unsuitable Posture in Receiving the Holy Sacrament ; so that if we were left at liberty, we might have enough to justify ourselves in making use of it.*

2. *It is appointed by our Givernours, whom God Commands us to obey in all Lawful things ; so that every Good Man, who is under Authority, ought to observe it.*

But if it were not our Duty when Authority has thus required the use of it, and it had no Reasons from it self to recommend it, but it were much better that some other Posture should be used ; yet,

3. *Since it lawfully may be used too, tho' not so well as another, if Men have any due value for, and desire of the Sacrament, for its sake, and rather than miss of it, they should at least comply with it.*

1. *Kneeling is no unsuitable Posture in Receiving the Holy Sacrament, so that if we were left at Liberty, we might have enough to justify ourselves in making use of it. For the Sacrament, as I have already shewn, is a Religious Feast, wherein we are set in the Presence of, and are concerned with Almighty God : and when we have to do with him, 'tis no was unfit sure to use such Posture, as is Humble and Reverent.*

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It is a Feast wherein we receive the greatest Benefits, no less than our Saviour Christ's Blessed Body and Blood, *i. e.* those Benefits which his Bloody Death procured: and when we receive Gifts, especially of that infinite Price, and from our Betters and Supreme Governours, it cannot misbecome us to use such Carriage as expresses most Respect and Thankfulness. It is a Feast whereat we confirm the New Covenant, and solemnly give Thanks and Praise to Christ; and pour out many Prayers and Promises to our Heavenly Lord: and when we are exercising Repentance, and uttering Praise, and making solemn Prayers and Oblations, it is not certainly improper to use such Gestures as best become Devotions. In the Sacrament we have to do with Almighty God, and receive most noble Gifts, and act most humble Repentance in shamefully confessing and renouncing of our sins, and give most hearty Thanks, and put up most ardent Prayers: and therefore that Posture must needs suit well with it, which becomes these Services. And that Kneeling will be allowed to do by all Persons, since it has been ordinarily well liked in all times, nay, preferr'd before others for the Posture of Devotions. As it is a Supper and a Feast, some are apt to think sitting, which with us at least is the ordinary Table-Posture,

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*sure*, to be most convenient. But as this is not a *Common*, but a *Religious* Feast, wherein we have to do with God, and perform so many things whereto all *inward Reverence* and *Humility* is required, there are reasons enough that most justly Authorise *Kneeling* too: so that if we direct our Eyes to them, we shall soon see that it may very reasonably be used, and is in no wise unsuitable or improper for it. And therefore if we were left at *Liberty* to Receive it as we pleas'd, we might have enough to justify ourselves in making use of it.

2. *Kneeling* is appointed by our Governours, whom God Commands us to obey in all lawful things; so that every Good Man that is under Authority, ought to observe it. God requires us to be subject to *Principalities* and *Powers*, and to obey *Magistrates*, Tit. 3. 1; and to obey them that have the Rule over us, and to submit ourselves; for they watch for our Souls, as they that must give an account of them, Heb. 13. 17. Now to obey, is to do what we are bidden; so that when they command this Posture, we are bound in all Duty and Submission to comply with them. Before they enjoyn'd it, we were at Liberty to use either it, or another, according to our own Discretion. But when once they have interposed their Authority, St Paul tells us, that Obedience in all Lawful

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*Lawful things*, such as *Kneeling* is, is our Duty. So that although we think another might be *better* used, and, were we left to ourselves, would make use of it; yet when once they have enjoyn'd this; must we deny ourselves, and submit to it.

But if *Kneeling* had neither any *Authority* effectually to enjoyn, nor any *Reason* from it self sufficient to recommend it; but that *sitting*, or some other Posture, were much fitter to be used: yet,

3. *Since it may at least lawfully be used too, though not so well, if men have any due value for, or desire of the Sacrament, for its sake, and rather than miss of it, they should at least comply with it.*

When we are hindred from the Sacrament by *little* things, and refuse to Communicate unless we can have it ordered according to our own liking in all Points, 'tis a sign we do not think we greatly need it, nor are very *desirous* of it; for if we were, 'tis certain small matters would not put us by it. Were we fully sensible how much it is both our *Duty*, and our *Privilege*, to partake in it, and thereupon did earnestly covet and long after it, we should be glad to be admitted to it in any Posture, and, so we might joyn in the thing, submit to any Gesture to Receive in. If any man refuse a *Present of a thousand Pound,*

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*Pound*, because it is brought to him in an homely Purse, that is coarse and much decay'd; or if he will throw back the conveyance of a fair Estate, because 'tis seal'd with a common Stamp, that wants a Coat of Arms to it: all the World would say he would not be so curious, if he stood in any great need of them. And if any Person should turn away from the most savoury and choicest meat, because it is dish'd up on Pewter, not on Plate; the By-standers would all conclude he is full enough already, and has no great edge of Appetite. And the case is just the same, when any of us shew niceness about the Posture of the Holy Sacrament. For did we really think we were in very great need of it, and had such an ardent desire, as that we might be said to hunger and thirst after it; we should be glad to have it in any Posture, as we could be allow'd it. So that although *Kneeling* were a Gesture whereto we were no ways obliged, nay, though it were justly to be disliked, not as unlawful indeed, but as inconvenient; yet, when the Sacrament is not otherwise to be had, there is no Man, who is duly desirous to receive, but will comply with it. He had rather, it may be, Communicate sitting, or standing, or after some other manner which he fancies better, were it left  
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to his own liking ; but yet, if he desires it in such measure as he ought, he will *submit* to receive Kneeling, rather than miss the opportunity, and not receive at all.

And this is the great thing, which I would urge upon all those who are kept back by this Hindrance ; namely, that although for its *own sake* they would not *chuse* it, yet for the *Sacraments sake*, which is not otherwise to be had, they would at least *comply* with it. In my Judgment it is their *Duty* to Kneel, since their Governours require it ; and the Posture is so *suitable* to the Feast, that were it not required, they might have enough to justify themselves in making use of it : and if, upon the Reasons I have here given, they are convinced of these things, that clears the Case without more ado, and is the best Solution of it. But if their prejudices stick still after all, and in those Points they happen not to be of my mind, but think themselves *free* from it, and that *sitting* is much *better* used : yet at least, since Kneeling may be used too, for the *Sacraments sake*, which, if they value as they ought, they would gladly accept, though in a Posture less convenient, let them *condescend* and *submit* to it. Though they had rather receive sitting when they may be allowed, yet they may  
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receive kneeling when there is need of it. And they must needs think it better to kneel to it, than, by stopping at a thing so *innocent*, though *less significant*, to be quite put by, and go without it.

But against this Compliance they may, perhaps, *object*, and it is the fairest thing which I know said against it, That they cannot comply with this *Injunction of Kneeling*, because it is cross to our *Saviours Institution*; for as he instituted the Holy Sacrament, so they think we ought to adhere to it.

But to clear this Point, which I shall do as plainly as I can, because it seems to have some weight in it, I shall observe,

1. That if using a Posture different from what our Saviour did, be a breaking his Institution, sitting no less than kneeling is a breach of it, so that they and we are equally concerned to answer it.

2. The Posture he used was no part of the Institution, so that the Institution is not broken when the Posture is alter'd: yea, neither it, nor any other has any Command at all for it; so that no Posture is necessary, but all, both theirs and ours, are still indifferent.

3. When a Posture different from that at the first Institution, was introduced in Sacraments, our Saviour himself, and they themselves too, have submitted to it.

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I say, *If using a Posture different from what our Saviour did, be a breaking his Institution, sitting no less than kneeling is a breach of it; so that they and we are equally concerned to answer it.*

The Posture which our Saviour used, was neither *sitting* nor *kneeling*, but another different from both of them. In the *Passover* 'tis plain he used *lying* or *leaning down*, which was the *Banquetting Gesture* of that time, when they used to eat at their Feasts *lying upon Couches*. And thus the *Evangelist* expresses it; *When Even was come*, says *St. Matthew*, *he sate down*, so according to the Custom of these Countries we render it, but the

word is, *he* (a) *lay down* (a) *Ἀνέκειτο*.  
with the twelve, *Mat. 26.*

20. And in the 21. of *St. John's Gospel*, *St. John* is said to have *lean'd on Jesus Breast at Supper*, which though, as I observ'd it be not spoke of the *Passover*, but of another Supper, which *Jesus* had two Days before, yet it shews the *Table-Posture* of those Days, when at Meals they lay one within another, *v. 20.* And this Posture in great likelihood he continued at his own Supper; for they were both *Religious Feasts*, and there was no more Reason why it should be excluded from the one than from the other. But if when  
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he altered his Gesture, according to the *Jewish* Custom, at *giving Thanks*, he continued in that all the time of his *own Supper*, as some suppose; yet was not that either *kneeling* or *sitting*, but a *standing* Posture. So that the Gesture our Saviour used, was as different from sitting, as it is from kneeling. And therefore if the use of one different from his be a breach of his Institution, it is equally broken on all sides, and one cannot urge it against another, but both are alike in Fault, and equally oblig'd to answer it.

And if any say, That albeit in sitting they do vary from the Posture he used, yet is it still to another *Table-Gesture*, which is of the same Nature, and may be held Equivalent: I desire them to consider, that then *they* are plainly gone off, as well as *we*, from the *Example of our Lord*, and from the Mode he used, since, whereas he *lay along*, they *sit upright*, and only stick to such a Gesture as agrees to the *Nature of the Feast*, and the Notion of the Communion being a *Supper* and a *Banquet*. So that their sitting is not Authorized by our Lord's having used it at first, for that he never did, but by its being a *Table-Gesture*, which becomes a *Feast*, and is thereby suited to the Nature of the Sacrament. And when once  
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this Ground is admitted, it will make well for kneeling too, since there is much also in the Nature of the thing to render it very suitable and convenient. For, as upon the account of its being a *Feast*, whilst they direct their Eye to that, they may be embolden'd to *sit* down at it: so also upon account of its being a most *Venerable* and *Religious Feast*, whereat all inward *Reverence* and *profound Humility* is required, they may see just Reason to use another more lowly Mode, and *kneel* when they Receive it. But if still they should think sitting the more agreeable Mode, and that, it being a Table-Gesture, a Supper is best suited by it: yet would this be no Reason why they cannot *comply* with kneeling, but only why, if they were left to their own Liberty, they would not make *choice* of it. For though they would not chuse it, yet are they at Liberty for all that to forbear sitting, and either to *stand*, or *lye*, or *kneel* at a Feast when *need* so requires it. So that whatever it may be to their own *free choice* of it, this can be no Hindrance to their *submission* and *compliance* with it.

But since both in *their* way and *ours*, the Gesture of our Lord, being now out of date through the different usage of the World, is quite relinquished; for a full Vindicati-  
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on of them as well as of ourselves in this Point, I observe,

2. That *the Posture he used was no part of the Institution, so that the Institution is not broken when the Posture is alter'd: yea, neither it, nor any other, has any Precept or Command at all for it; so that no Posture is necessary, but all, both theirs and ours, are still indifferent.*

*The Posture wherein it is first received, I say, is no part of the Institution of a Sacrament, so that the Institution is not broken when the Posture is altered. It is only the Thing which is appointed; but as for the Posture, or the Time, or the Place, or the Company, they are little matters that are unworthy of a particular appointment, and are left at Liberty to be order'd as mens Discretion shall judge most convenient. And, indeed, if the Gesture our Lord used were any part of the Institution of this Holy Feast, the Time, and Place, and other Circumstances would be so too; for they seem all of equal weight, and were all equally used at first, which is all that the Gesture has to plead for it. So that if it be a Part of the Institution to receive the leaning Posture, because our Lord used it; it is equally a Part of it to receive after Supper, which is the time he chose for it; and in an upper Room, which*  
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was the place wherein he Celebrated it ; and only with *men*, who were the Company he invited ; and those no more than *twelve*, which was the Number he selected.

*All these* can plead the same Title for being Parts of the Institution, which the Gesture can, *i. e.* *their being used at the first appointment of it*, which is all the claim it can make to it. And therefore since the *Time*, and *Place*, and *Number*, and *Persons* are no Part, but may be alter'd without any breach of the Institution, as 'tis on all hands concluded they may ; the *Posture* is no part of it, but may be alter'd without any such Infringement also.

And to shew this more fully, it really has been done, and that too in the Judgment of our Lord himself without any wrong to the Institution ; and that was in the *Jewish Passover*. For the Posture wherein it was first Celebrated, was in that of *Travellers*, with their *Loyns girt*, and their *Staves in their Hand*, and their *Shoes on their Feet* ; yea, and what makes this Circumstance more considerable in their Case, it was by *God's own Order* and *Appointment*. For thus shall you eat it, saith God, with your *Loyns girded*, and your *Shoes on your Feet*, and your *Staff in your Hand* ; and you shall eat it in haste, it is the *Lord's Passover*, Exod. 12. 11. But afterwards,

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afterwards, in compliance with the Course of Times, and the Custom of other Countries, this *standing Posture* of Travellers was changed into the *leaning or discumbing Posture* of men at ease, which change our Saviour himself most evidently allowed, by his *own usage* and observance of it. For when he ate the *Passover* with his *Disciples*, it was not in the *travelling Posture* used at first, but in this *discumbing Posture*, which was then introduced instead of it. *When Even was come,*

\* Ἀνέκλιτε.

*Jesus sate, or rather  
\* lay down to Supper with  
the twelve, Mat. 26. 20.*

Thus is the Posture which our Blessed Lord used in the Sacrament, no part of the Institution; so that the Institution is not broken, when it is alter'd. And if it had been any part of it, his *lying* could no more be changed into *sitting*, because it is another *Table-Posture*, than the *Bread* and *Wine* into any other *Food* or *Liquour*, because they are a *Table-Furniture*. For the *parts* of the Sacrament must be kept the same as our Saviour left them, and we must not go about to alter and put in others instead of them, lest we be thought to cancel his, and institute a *New Sacrament* of our own.

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*Command at all for it ; so that no Posture is necessary, but all, both theirs and ours, are still Indifferent. It is not at all enjoyn'd by our Saviour Christ, for he only Commands the Thing, bidding them take Bread and eat it, and Wine and drink it, Mat. 26. 26, 27 ; and to do this in Remembrance of him, Luc. 22. 19 ; but says not a word prescribing the Gesture, Time, or other Circumstances which they are to use in so doing. Neither is it at all mentioned by St. Paul, who, as our Lord had done before, commands only after the mention of the Bread, that we should do that in remembrance of him ; and after the mention of the Cup, that we should drink that in remembrance of him ; but gives no Command at all concerning Posture, or any other such inconsiderable and outward thing, 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. And yet he delivered all that to them, which he had received in Command from Christ relating to the Holy Communion: I have received of the Lord, saith he, that which I also have delivered unto you, v. 23. So that altho' God has most strictly commanded the receiving of the Sacrament, yet has he no where commanded any Posture to be used in it ; and therefore none of them is necessary, but, all both theirs and ours, are still indifferent.*

Thus then is our *Kneeling* Posture at  
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the Communion, as also others *Standing*, or *Sitting* where that is the Fashion, no *unlawful* thing, nor any *Breach* of the *Institution*, tho' our Saviour used a *different* one. The Posture he Communicated in, was *no part* of the Appointment; so that there is no Breach of it when that is altered; and neither *it*, nor *any other*, has any *Command* for it; so that none of them are either *necessary* or *unlawful* upon this account, but all may still be used, as *Publick Authority* or *Private Prudence* shall determine it.

And as the Posture used at *first*, without any *Breach* of the *Institution*, or of any *Law of Christ*, may be altered, and a New one lawfully brought in, instead of it; so,

3ly, *When a Posture different from that at the first Institution was introduced in Sacraments, our Blessed Lord himself, and they themselves too, have submitted to it.*

As for our *Blessed Lord*, the matter is plain of him in the Case of the *Passover* already mentioned. He found the Posture different from that, which was at first used in *Egypt*: for then, as I have noted, they *stood*, like *Travellers*; but now they *lay down*, like Men at *rest* and *ease*. But since *Common Usage* and *Publick Authority* had altered the former Mode, and settled this later instead of it, he would

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not go to dispute, but readily conformed himself to it. For when he *came to eat the Passover*, says St. Matthew, *he sate*, or rather *lay down with the twelve*, Mat. 26. 20.

And as for *themselves*, they do the same thing too, in Sitting where that is the Posture, which Law or Custom has introduced among them. For *Sitting* is a Gesture very different from what our Saviour used, who did not *sit*, but *lye down* at the Sacrament. But when the *Assembly of Divines* had brought in this Mode amongst us, notwithstanding its being a Deviation from what was done at first, they did then comply with it, and would still adhere to it.

If they will be guided therefore either by their *Saviour's Practice*, or *their own*, in this Point; when *Use* and *Publick Authority* have settled any Posture of Communicating, they must submit to it. The Gesture which they find among *us*, is not more different from what our Saviour used, than the Gesture *he* found in the *Passover*, was from what the *Jews* first used in *Egypt*: But yet he made no scruple of this Posture, so plainly novel and of a later date, but readily complied with it. In conformity to which *Example*, the *Apostle* teaches us in *lesser things* to make Common Usages our Rule, for the pre-  
vention



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vention of all *Disputes* and *Variance* ;-----  
*If any man seem to be contentions*, in the case  
of *Womens* being *unvail'd* in the *Publick*  
*Assemblies*, we have no such *Custom*, nor the  
*Church of God*, 1 Cor. 11. 16. And the  
*Sitting* which they think well of, is as dif-  
ferent from our *Saviour's Posture*, as *Kneel-*  
*ing* is ; but yet they readily embraced  
it, when once the *Assembly* had directed  
it. So that if they are but free to  
follow our *Saviour's Practice*, and *St. Paul's*  
*Rule* in this Case ; or if they will go as  
far with the *Churches Order*, as formerly  
they did with the *Assemblies*: since *Com-*  
*mon Usage* and *Publick Authority* have set-  
tled *Kneeling* at the *Sacrament* among us,  
they ought not to stick out, but to sub-  
mit to it.

And thus it appears, that their *Compli-*  
*ance* with our *Use of Kneeling* in the  
*Communion*, is not at all against our *Sa-*  
*viour's Institution* ; so that the fear of  
wronging that, ought not to hinder any  
of them from it. It is, indeed, a *diffe-*  
*rent Posture* from what our Lord first  
used ; but if that be a *Breach* of his *In-*  
*stitution*, *Sitting* no less than *Kneeling* is  
a *Breach* of it ; so that *they* and *we* are  
*equally* concerned to answer it. But in  
behalf of *both* 'tis easily answered, That  
the *Posture* he used was no *Part* of the *In-*  
*stitution*

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stitution of the Sacrament; so that the Institution is not broken, when the Posture is altered. That neither it, nor any other, has any Precept for it; so that none of them is necessary, but all indifferent and lawful to be used, according as Mens own private Judgment and Discretion, where they are left to that, shall direct, or Publick Authority and Custom shall any where prescribe it. And that when these have in any place introduced a Posture different from what he used, he himself, by his own Practice in this very case, and they too who makes this Objection, by theirs, have taught us to comply with it.

But against this Compliance it is by some still farther urged, That *Kneeling* in the Sacrament is *Worshipping the Bread*, and a *Popish Rite*, and therefore they dare not yeild and conform to it.

Now in Answer to its being a *worshipping the Bread*; I would observe to them that there is no fear of that, because we, do not kneel to the Bread, nor have any intent to worship it: and if really we did intend it, without which there is no Adoration paid to it, we should worship it whether we kneel, or sit; so that their mode and ours are equally concern'd, and it must be own'd on all sides, that not the Posture, but the Intent is to be blamed for it.

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1. In kneeling at the Sacrament, I say, there is no fear of worshipping the Bread, because we do not kneel to it, nor have any intent to worship it. If we should kneel down to the Bread, indeed, and, submitting ourselves before it, Pay *Divine Honour* and *Homage* to it; this were really to worship it. And this the *Papists* plainly do in that *Reverence*, which they shew towards it. For they verily believe it to be *Transubstantiated*, i. e. that the substance of the Bread, after the words of Consecration, is passed into the Natural Body and Blood of Christ, which with his humane Soul has his Divinity hypostatically united to it: and upon this Belief they fall down to it with a design to Reverence it, and to give as much Adoration to it, as they would to Christ himself were he visibly present. But although this be *their* intent, yet is it in no Case *ours* in kneeling at the Sacrament. For we kneel not to the Bread, to give any *Homage* and *Adoration* unto it, as our

† It is hereby declared that thereby (viz. by kneeling) no Adoration is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental Bread and

† Church has most expressly declared in the Rubrick; so that if any Persons intend any such thing, they must not say they follow the Church in

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in it, since in the most earnest and express words it utterly disclaims, and warns us all against it. But we use kneeling to a quite different end, viz. only as it is a Reverential \* *Humble Posture*, wherein we may very decently receive Gifts, and make Confession of our Sins, and give Thanks, and pour out our Prayers to Almighty God: so that our kneeling is only unto God, who is the proper object of our worship, but not at all to the Bread, which is never intended to be serv'd, nor receives any Homage or Submission by it. This, I say, is all we do in kneeling at the Sacrament, as the Church requires, and as our own Consciences bear us witness, which are the only sure Judges in this case, since they alone do thoroughly un-

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wine there bodily received, or unto any Corporal presence of Christ's Natural Flesh and Blood. For the Sacramental Bread and Wine remain still in their Natural substances, and therefore may not be adored (for that were Idolatry, to be abhor'd of all faithful Christians) And the Natural Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ are in Heaven, and not here; it being against the Truth of Christ's Natural Body to be at one time in more places than one. Rub. at the end of the Commun. Service. \* Which Order (of Kneeling) is well meant, for a signification of our Humble and Grateful acknowledgment of the Benefits of Christ therein given to all worthy Receivers ib.

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derstand, and are privy to our own Intentions and Purposes. And when both our *Church* and we do thus openly profess, that we *kneel not* to the *Bread*, nor have any intent thereby to worship and submit ourselves to it ; there is none sure will be so rash and unchristianly Censorious, as to charge us with it. But if any do, they are thereby Guilty, not only of an *open uncharitableness*, in imputing the worst things to us without any just Cause ; but also of *great Presumption* and *high Arrogance*, since therein they take upon them to teach us our own thoughts, and to tell us our own Hearts and Intentions better than we can tell ourselves.

2. If in *kneeling* at the Sacrament we *should have any such intent*, without which there is no *Adoration* paid to it, we *should worship it whether we kneel or sit* ; so that *their Mode* and *ours* are *equally concerned* in this doubt, and it must be own'd on all sides, that not the *Posture*, but the *Intent* is to be blamed for it. For when we design worship to any Object, we can give it by a bare *inward Homage* and *submission of the Mind*, without the help of any *outward act* ; or, if we would make it a worship of the *Body* too, that may be done by any *Posture* wherein we design to express it. It may be done *sitting*, as well as in a more *humble mode* ; for tho' that

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that seem to shew more of *Familiarity* than *Respect*, yet has it sometimes been used for the *Posture* of *Worship*. Thus the *Gentiles* worshipped their *Gods*, as (a) *Tertullian* tells us, -----the *Nations* says he, *worship their Images sitting*. And thus also the *Jews* sometimes worshipped in their *Religious Feasts*, when they fed upon their (b) *Sacrifices*: for so it was plainly in the worship of the *Golden Calf*, where, after they had offer'd their *Burnt-Offerings* and their *Peace-Offerings*, they sate down to eat and to drink upon what they had offer'd, *Exod.* 32. 6. So that if any of those that *kneel* are Guilty of worshipping the *Bread*, their *kneeling* must not be accused for it, since, when giving worship is their intent, they would be Guilty of the same thing if they *sate*. And therefore it is not the *Posture*, which were very commendable were it directed unto *God*, but the misapplying it to the *Bread*, and using it with that *irreligious intent*, which is to bear the blame of it.

As for those then who are afraid to *kneel at the Sacrament*, for fear lest there-

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(a) Cum perinde faciant Nationes adoratis Sigillaribus suis refidendo, vel propterea in nobis reprehendi mereatur [viz. sitting at Prayers] quod apud Idolacelebatur. *Tertul. de Orat.* c. 12.

(b) 1 Sam. 9. 13, 22

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by with the *Papists* they should worship the *Bread*; my answer in brief is this. To worship the *Bread*, as the *Papists* do, is to kneel down to it, and to pay Divine Honour and Adoration to it, because they believe *Christ* bodily present in it; and this may be done in any Posture, either sitting or kneeling, when any Persons so intend it; and without such intent 'tis not done by kneeling in the Holy Sacrament; and they are best able to tell themselves whether in Receiving they intend any such thing or no, and, if they say they do not, 'tis great Arrogance as well as Uncharitableness in others to charge them with it; and if they have any such design, they must not say it is to comply with our Church, because it expressly declares against it, and warns them of the danger of it. If they worship the *Bread*, their kneeling is no cause of it; and they may use that Posture only to confess their Sins, and give Thanks, and make Prayers, by all which they worship God, if they are so minded; and if still they will worship the *Bread* by it, they go off from the Injunction of the Church, which would deter them from it. - So that their Submission to the Churches Order in this Case, can put them in no danger of worshipping the *Bread*; and therefore in complying with her, they have no cause at all to be afraid of it.

And then as for this Kneeling in the  
Sacrament

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Sacrament being a *Popish Rite*, if they mean that the *Papists use it*, they may call their *own Sitting a Popish Rite* too upon the same ground, because that also is sometimes used by them in receiving. For the *Benedictine Monks*, as

\* *Didoclavius*, a zealous Assertor of the *Sitting Mode*, has observed from *Bullinger*, *sit at the Communion sometimes*. Nay, so doth the *Pope himself*, as *William Thomas*, an Eye-witness of it, in the Year 1547, says the † *Quench-Coal*, in his *History of Italy*, plainly testifies; and as \* *Durandus* also clearly affirms; and as the † *Book of the Sacred Ceremonies*

\* Hodie in Cathedralibus Ecclesiis & Monasteriis Benedictinorum, in Die Cœnæ Domini ante Parascevan, &c. Evangelium Johannis a Diacono publice prælegitur, & dulcissima illa colloquia Christi, quæ abiturus cum Discipulis habuit, recitantur: interim ordine dispositis mensis, convivæ assident, panem

azymum frangentes, &c. *Didoclav. Alt. Damasc.* c. 10. p. 746. † *Quench-Coal*, p. 12. \* --- Summus Pontifex ad sedem ascendens, ibique confidens, universis cernentibus, majorem partem oblatae suscipit de Partena quam Subdiaconus apportaverat de Altari, ipsamque Dentibus subdividens, unam particulam ejus sumit, & aliam in Calicem mittit, &c. *Durand. Ration. Divin. Offic.* l. 4. c. 54. Nu. 4 p. 203. +--- Imperator retrahens se ad partem dextram, stat usque quo Pontifex ad sedem eminentem communicaturus revertatur, quem Imperator sequitur. *Lib. Sac. Carem. S. Rom. Eccl.* l. 1. sect. 5. c. 3. p. 59.



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sufficiently intimates in one Case, *viz.* at the *Coronation of the Emperours*. *Sitting and Kneeling* then are both equal as to this Point, that the *Papists use them*: but that need not make us throw them away as *Popish Rites*, or be any Disparagement to either of them. For the *Papists* have many *harmless* things, and many *very good*, as well as many *bad* among them. They have the *Scriptures*, which are never the less the *Word of God* because they read them; and the *Creed*, and the *Lord's Prayer*, which none of us will cast aside because they *use* them; and *kneel at their Prayers*, which yet we ought not to disclaim for fear of *symbolizing* with them: So that both *Sitting* and *Kneeling* may be good things among us, tho' both are used by them too.

But if by a *Popish Rite*, they mean that it is one of the *Corruptions of Popery*, whereby they have depraved *Christianity*; that is a great Mistake, which has no colour of Reason or Ground at all for it. For *Kneeling* is not only a very innocent, but a very decent Posture wherein to receive Gifts, and make humble Confession of our Sins, and put up Prayers and Supplications to Almighty God; all which we are to do in the *Holy Sacrament*. It is probably a much more *Ancient Rite*, and either it,  
or

or some other *Posture of Reverence and Adoration*, which is of the same account with it, was used in the *Communion* long before *Poper*y, i. e. the *Popish Errours and Corruptions*, which are a novel and upstart Religion, had any Footing.

As for this *Objection* then against *Complying* with the *Injunction of Kneeling* in the *Sacrament*, viz. its being a *worshipping the Bread*, and a *Popish Rite*; there is really no weight in it. For they cannot *worship the Bread* in *complying* with the *Church*, since it *forbids* it; nor do any thing that is *truly and cullpably Popish*, tho' the *Papists* use it (as indeed they do *Sitting* too, which yet is never the worse for it) because it is no *Corruption of Popery*, but either *it*, or some other *Posture of Adoration* which is of equal Danger with it, was in *use* in *Christianity* before the *Popish Errours* were introduced. So that altho' they cannot see Reason enough to desire it, nor would Receive *Kneeling* were another *Posture* allowed; yet since the *Sacrament* is not otherwise to be had, they may very safely and wisely comply with, and submit to it still.

And thus I have considered this *Impediment*, whereby many good Minds, who are sensible of the Duty of it, and are otherwise very well prepared for it, are

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yet unhappily kept back from the *Holy Sacrament*. And the Result of all is this, That when they stay away upon this account, because *they will not kneel in receiving it*, they refrain upon a most unjustifiable Ground, which will afford them no *Excuse*, nor ought in any Reason to be their *Hindrance*. For *Kneeling* is really no *unsuitable*, but a very *decent Posture*; so that if we were left at *liberty* to receive how we would, we might have enough to *justify ourselves* in making use of it. And it is *appointed us by our Governours*, whom God commands us to obey in all *lawful things*; so that in regard to *their* having *prescribed* it, every *good Man* among us *ought to observe it*. And if neither *Authority* could impose, nor it had any *Reason* from it self to recommend it, but that *Sitting* were on all accounts much *fitter* to be used; yet since in their own account it may *lawfully* be used too, and is only a *less decent* Mode, but has no Sin or Offence in it, if they have any earnest desire for the Sacrament, which is not otherwise to be had, for *its sake* they will at least *comply* with it. If they rate things truly, since *Authority* has *enjoynd* it, they will see themselves *obliged* to use it. But however, since their Saviour has laid no weight upon it, but accepts

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a Devout Mind in any Posture, though they had rather use another, yet is there nothing to hinder their Compliance and Submission to it. So that there is no just pretence for any, upon this account, to refrain coming to the Sacrament.

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CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

*Of some other Hindrances.*

The Contents.

*An Account of some other Hindrances. One abstains because the day before he was at a Feast. Another, because his Child is sick, or he himself is lightly indisposed. Athird, because his Wife, or Husband cannot come along with him to joyn in it. A fourth, because he has a Visit to make, or a Friend come in, who in all civility must be attended. A fifth, because of a Showr of Rain, or a sharp Air abroad, so that he must endure a piercing Blast, or wet his Foot, to go out to it. These are no Excuse from it, but still Men are bound to Communicate.*

**H**AVING hitherto considered those *Pleas*, which seem to be of most weight in hindring Men from the Sacrament, and possess them either with a *Scruple* than they dare not, or with an *important Reason* why they should not chuse to come to it; before I dismiss this Head,

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Head, I shall take notice of some *others*, which, tho' of less moment, may yet seem fit to be considered.

Men oft-times give such Reasons for their Neglect of the Sacrament, as are Reasons to themselves for neglecting nothing else that is of half that moment. *The Unseasonableness of the Weather, the Sicknes of a Child, the paying a Complement to a Friend, or the like.* is thought a sufficient Hindrance from the Communion: Whereas it would not hinder them from any Business, which either *Friendship*, their *own Pleasure*, or their *Profit* requires of them. For how cogent soever they may account them in keeping them back from *it*, they would not be withheld by them from pursuing any *Sport*, or from driving an *advantageous Bargain*, or carrying on any *End* or *Interest*, or *serving their Friend* in any *Business* or *Affair of moment*. And can any Man now have the Face to give that for a Reason to Almighty God, which he would be ashamed to offer as a Reason to any one else? Can he expect to excuse the *Neglect of a weighty Duty* unto him, by such trifling Apologies, as would not excuse the *Neglect of a Bargain*, nay of a *Pastime* to himself; nor of a *Concern of weight*, or, perhaps, of a *Complement* to his *Companions*?

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*panions* ? Those Men are surely in a sad Case, who are forced to seek shelter under such thin Pretences ; and rather than make such trifling Pleas for any Act of Disobedience, it were by much their wiser course to be wholly silent, and not seek to defend themselves at all.

When these Pleas are made then, there is no Excuse in them. And indeed they would not be made by any Men, if once they were convinced how much it is both their *Duty* and their *Interest* to come to the Communion. For when they are detained by such frivolous Reasons, as would not either be urged, or admitted in excuse for any other Business ; they shew only their great Indifference to it, and how they esteem it less than any other Matters : and this they could not do, if they held it either as a valuable Privilege, or as a Point of Conscience. The best way therefore to remove these Hindrances from the Sacrament, is to possess Men with a Belief that God has peremptorily enjoyn'd it, and that 'tis infinitely their own interest and high Privilege to be admitted to it. And having shew'd these very largely in the *Second Part*, I shall refer the *Reader* unto that, as a very likely way, not only to answer *these*, but also to prevent all *other* such like Pleas against it.

But

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But that such Persons as are serious in these Hindrances, may not think themselves sleighted, besides this *general Answer*, I shall say something to the *Particulars*.

1. *One keeps away from the Sacrament, because the day before either he himself has made a Feast, or has been treated by his Neighbour at a Noble Entertainment.* But why, I pray, must this excuse it? For if at the Feast he was guilty of any *incapacitating Fault*, or any *waysintemperate*; 'tis not the *Feast*, but such *Offence or Intemperance* which is no be alledg'd for it. But if the Entertainment was *Friendly* in the *Design*, *Temperate* at the *Table*, and every way *harmless* and *charitable*, hurting no Man's *Fame*, nor disturbing any Man's *Quiet* in the *Conversation*; wherein was his Lord offended, or his Soul unfitted by it? The *Primitive Christians* received it at a *Friendly Treat*, for in those days their *Love-Feasts* always went along with it: so that an *Hospitable Entertainment* the day before, yea or the *same day*, doth not unfit Men to *Communicate*; but if in all things else they are duly qualified, they may worthily receive still.

2. *Another abstains from this Holy Feast, because his Child is sick, or because he has taken Cold himself, or has some aking*  
in



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*in his Head, or is otherwise lightly indispos'd.*

But what if his *Child is sick*? Doth he attend it? Or is it advisable for him to be so far disturbed at it, till his Mind is unfit for those Religious Tempers, which he is to exercise at the Holy Sacrament? Perhaps his Child fares the worse because of some Sin that he has committed; and will he not then instantly repent of it, and come to the Lord's Table, there to have his Pardon seal'd, that so this Load being taken off, it might be eased by it? But whether that be so or no, if he has any sence of Religion, either in his *Child's* Case or his *own*, he will be earnestly desirous to make God his *Physician*, and call out to him for help: and that he cannot do so effectually, or prevail in it so certainly at any other time, as I have shewed, as in the Holy Sacrament. For God is never more enclined to hear us, nor are we ever more likely to have our Prayers granted for any thing that he sees fit for us, than when we send them up along with this Solemn Commemoration of our Saviour's Death, which is the only Argument that has Authority and Power with him, to obtain any thing on our behalf. So that if a wise Man longs to have his Child recovered, he cannot do a more unwise thing, than either to grieve so far

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far till he is *unsfited* for this Feast, or when he might be fit for it, to *neglect* it ; since his Prayers there would be a most *probable* and *prudent* course to obtain it.

And then as for his *own indisposition*, if indeed it has brought upon him such *heaviness* as unfits him for any Spiritual Act, or if it is in that Degree, that 'tis not *safe* for him to stir abroad with it ; God prefers *Natural* and *Essential Duties* before *Positive Institutions*, and *Mercy* before *Sacrifice*, so that it will be a just excuse for it. But if it cannot hinder him from looking after business, and going among his Neighbours, or venturing out upon any appearance of doing either himself or his Friend a kindness : why must it excuse him from attending upon God, and doing him this Service ; except that be thought sufficient to excuse our attendance upon him which excuses nothing else, which is a thing, I presume, they would be loth to own, who stay away by reason of this Hindrance.

3. Some again refrain the Holy Sacrament, because *their Wife*, or *Husband* cannot bear them Company, and joyn in it. One of them is either *accidentally prevented* that they cannot, or *sinfully negligent* and *unprepared* that they will not come to it ; and therefore in Compliance and  
for

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for Companies sake the other also keeps away at present, and defers it to another time when both together can partake of it.

This I think is a *popular*, but 'tis a very *weak* excuse. For the receiving the Communion is an indispensable Duty, concerning which every Person must give account of *themselves* unto Almighty God; so that one near Relation can no more talk of neglecting it for the others sake, than of neglecting to say their *Prayers* and *serve God* because the other doth it not, or of being *irreligious* to symbolize with some dear Friends, and *casting away* their *precious Souls* out of *Complement*. Nay, if he had not thus *enjoyn'd*, but only *Friendly invited* us to Communicate; yet would it be a very *rude* and *disobliging* thing to refuse his Invitation upon this account, because some others, who are very dear to us, have not either the *opportunity*, or *good manners* to accept it. For if an *Husband* or a *Wife* will not Receive, unless the *other* also will consent to joyn it; it is a sign they come not so much for their *Lord's*, as for *each others* sake, so that *they* and not their *Saviour* have the Service and the Honour of it: and this is an odd account for any man to give to Christ of his neglecting this Feast,  
when

when he is most affectionately and earnestly invited to it.

When any Persons stay away from the Sacrament then, because they cannot have their Bosom-Friend to joyn in it: they are Guilty of a *great sin*, since they are bound to it whether the other come or not, and pass a *great affront* and *dishonour* upon their Lord; so that this is far from having any excuse in it. Nay, instead of being a Reason why they should abstain from it, the neglect of one dear Relation lays a greater *obligation* on the other to Communicate. For when one cannot come, so that there must be a defect on that part, that is *too much* already, since neither ought to be wanting in it; and therefore there is the *more need* the other should Receive, not only thereby to shew their *own Duty*, but also to *supply their Friends defects* as well as they can, and make amends for it.

4. A *Fourth* absents himself from this Holy Feast, because *that day he is to visit a Friend abroad*, or *has a Friend accidentally come in to Dine with him*, who must in all *Civility* be attended.

But why must our Respects to our Saviour and our other Friends be made thus to *interfere*, so that *one* must needs be a temptation to omit the *other*? How comes it  
that

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that of all the days in the month we fix upon that for visiting or entertaining of our Friends, when our Blessed Lord invites us to his Table there to entertain us? Or if by accident a Friend then breaks in upon us, why must that detain us when Christ calls us? Is it any part of his Friendship to make us disobey our Lord, or to put us by embracing this high honour and most advantageous opportunity when 'tis offer'd? Or if he be God's Friend too as well as ours, is it not very fit that he should go also and joyn with us? When to Communicate is a Duty in both of us, is it any wise Reasonable that he should make us stay away, and not go himself along with us? But if it happen that a Friend who is *unwilling to Communicate* falls in to be entertained, or a visit at that time would be expected: Since our Saviour and they cannot be attended too, which ought in Reason to be prefer'd? Is there any to whom we owe more Respect and Observance, than we do to Christ Jesus? Should we affect the Company, or Court the Conversation of any Person, more than his? Are there any who ought more highly to be valued by us, or have better deserv'd of us, or whom we should study more to make our Friend, than him who has gain'd  
us

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us Eternal Life, and that by laying down his own Hearts Blood for the Purchase? When more *Honourable Persons*, or better *Friends* invite us, let us turn our backs upon his Table, and pay *them* Attendance. But since he can have no Competitors in this Case, where is the *Justice*, the *Honour* and *Respect* to him, when this is given as the Reason of our Absence?

A *Fifth* neglects the Holy Sacrament, because of a *Shower of Rain*, or a *sharp Air* abroad; so that he must endure a piercing blast, or wet his Foot if he goes out for it.

But is he thus tender of himself in any other matters? And would these dreadful Scare-Crows put him by any other Concerns which fright him from this Ordinance? If they stood in the way of his *Pleasures*, would he refrain them? If they lay between him and his *worldly Interests*, would he be discouraged by them? If they met him in the way as he were going to *do his Friend a kindness*, would they cause him to turn back again? Though they would not *justify it*, yet when they hinder him from these and such like matters, they may with more colour be *pleaded* in excuse of his absence from the *Lords Supper*. But are not men much at a Loss for excuses to shift off this Duty, when such as this, so full of palpable Contempt  
and

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and a careless Spirit, must serve their turn, and be thought sufficient? And have not we an hard task to *Conduct them on to Eternal happiness*, which must put them upon *Fighting and Striving*, and giving all *Diligence*, and *denying themselves*, and *taking up the Cross*, and *plucking out right Eyes*, and *cutting off right Hands*, &c. when they stumble thus at *Straws*, and are beat back by the force of *every Feather* which is blown in their Faces? and such trifles as these can discourage their going on in the most weighty Duties, and make them recoil again upon our Hands?

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CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

*Devotions fitted for the Sacrament.*

The Contents.

*A Meditation, and Prayer, for the exciting, and exercising the Grace of Thankfulness in the Communicant. Another for the exercise of Charity. A Third for the exercise of Resignation to God's Will. A Fourth for the exercise of Repentance. Some other Forms of Devotion, both at, and after Receiving. After we have received, we must be careful to make Good those Holy Vows and Promises, which we made to God in the Holy Sacrament.*

**A**S for all these Excuses then, which *careless* men, who make no Conscience of the Sacrament, give for their Absence from it, they will not stand them in any stead, nay, they are such as no wise man dare own, when once they are examined. They shew nothing else, but the *disregard* men have of Christ, their *unaffectedness* with all that he has done and suffered, their *absolute indifference* to have  
it



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it remembred, and their utter Contempt of this Duty, which he has commanded them. They are a good Evidence of their own careless, undutiful, and irreverent mind, and Manifest how little they set by their Blessed Lord; so that the urging of them is a ready way to give more offence, but not to make any excuse at all.

And thus I have done with all those Pleas, which are wont, I think, most generally to keep men from the Communion, and would be most apt to hinder those things, which I have said about the Duty and Advantage of it in the second part, from having their due effect upon them. Among these there are some, perhaps, may seem to be little objections: but little as they are, they are an hindrance to some minds; and since it is not below them to stop at them, I am far from thinking it too trivial and low a thing for me to answer them. And upon the whole matter it appears, that to Communicate is a great Duty, and a great Benefit, and that none of those Pleas which are ordinarily urged for it, can in any just sort excuse mens neglect of the Sacrament. For neither their unworthiness to partake in it, nor the danger of Damnation threatned to every unworthy Communicant, nor the Fear of breaking that promise of New Life which is made in it, nor the

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the apprehended Difficulty and want of leisure to prepare for it, nor their being unbettered and unimproved by it, nor the want of that Charity which is to be profess'd at it, nor the having some Enemies, after all their Endeavours for Reconciliation, unreconciled, nor the seeming Presumption of joyning in it, nor the Customary Absence of many good People from it, nor the Admittance of unworthy Receivers to it, nor the Imposition of Kneeling at it: neither these, I say, nor any other Impediment whereby Men are apt to excuse it to their own Minds, can justify and bear them out in absenting themselves when they are invited. No ill Man can be excused, and no good Man need to be hindered by them. So that every Man, as he renders our Blessed Lord's Command, and his own Souls Interest, must be careful reverently and devoutly to partake in this Holy Feast, when he has an Opportunity, and is called so to do.

And now I have gone thro' all those Particulars, which I propos'd at first, and which I thought most proper to be insisted on, to engage Men to a *Worthy Reception* of the Holy Sacrament. I have shewn what is the meaning of *Eating and Drinking* in this Feast, and wherein lies the *Worthiness* of doing it, and what strict Obligations we have to it, and how great Bene-

*fits we are like to receive by it, and answered those Pleas which are most generally given out to excuse the Neglect of it: and this with all honest Minds, who are desirous and free to hear, and will have the patience to consider, may seem sufficient to inforce a due Attendance on it. And when once Men are so disposed, and seriously resolv'd to Communicate, I shall add a few things to assist them in a right Discharge of this Duty, and so conclude this Subject.*

When we come to the Holy Sacrament, to commemorate the Death of our Bleeding Lord, whose Body there is represented as broken, and his most precious Blood as shed, on our account; we are to shew forth an affectionate and hearty Thankfulness for so invaluable a Kindness, and an entire Resignation of ourselves to his Use, and Repentance of all our Sins, fully purposing to amend them all thenceforwards, and an universal Peace and Charity towards all our Neighbours; all which we must excite in our own Souls by due Considerations.

1. We must shew forth an affectionate and hearty Thankfulness for so invaluable a Kindness. And what Soul can be slow to pay this, who considers how infinitely our dear Lord has deserved of us? For he has got us the most precious and glorious things, which Heaven it self could afford, viz. that  
all

all our Sins should be freely pardoned, and that the Holy Ghost, that Immense, Eternal, and All sufficient Spirit, should come in at all times to our help, and that we should be in no less Quality than the Sons of God, and Heirs of a Kingdom, who are assured of eternal Joys and Glories in another World. And ought not Gifts so august and superlatively excellent to be most affectionately acknowledged? He has bought all these, to bestow upon us, at the dearest Rate, not only taking the most unwearied Pains, but also paying the highest Price, and laying down his own most precious Blood for the Purchase. And must not such astonishing Kindness, which was affrighted by no Hazards, nor stopt at any Difficulties, nor declined any Sufferings, not the Suffering of Death it self, for our sakes, be always held in a most thankful Remembrance? And in all this he had no Ends of his own to serve of us, but was led on purely by the Pleasure he takes in our Happiness. He was not won by our Deserts; for, alas! we were his profest Enemies, who had nothing to shew but highest Provocations: he was not wearied out with the importunity of our Intreaties, for it came, as undeserv'd, so altogether unask'd, whatsoever he did for us: he was not moved by the Mediation of Friends;

for whom, alas! had we to *intercede* for us? And shall not such *amazing Love* and *Goodness*, so *frankly shew'd*, without any Eye at *Self-ends* or *Private Interests*, without *Intreaties* or *Deserts*, nay, in spite of all *Discouragements* and *highest Provocations*, be entertain'd with *greatest Joy* and *grateful Acclamations*? He has been an *infinitely endearing* and *intire Friend* to us, without any *Inducement* but his own most *generous Kindness*, and *against* all *Discouragements*, and *beyond* all *Bounds*, and *under* the most *frightful Hazards*, and at the *highest Expenses*, giving his own *Soul* even to *Death*, for a *Ransom* to redeem *ours*. And whensoever we hear or think of this, I am confident it will not be difficult for any of us to embrace him with *Hearts* full of *Love* and *high Desires*, and pay him most *intire Thanks*, and burst out into *Songs of Praise*, and find it a most *joyful Business* so to do.

“What am I, my dear Lord, will a devout Mind then say, that thou shouldest leave the Right-hand of God, and come to visit me? Hadst thou no Ease in thy own Breast, so long as I lay plunged in Misery? And couldst not thou be Happy in Heaven, nor enjoy thy self amidst all the Joys and Glories of that Blissful Place, unless I were there to bear thee  
“Company?

"Company? How camest thou, being so  
 "highly exalted, and the Eternal Son of  
 "God, to have any Affectionate Concern  
 "at all for me? Was not I a deformed,  
 "polluted Wretch, and thy profest Ene-  
 "my? And were not either of these e-  
 "nough to turn away thy Face from me?  
 "But if, notwithstanding all this, thy  
 "overflowing Goodness would put thee  
 "upon doing something for my sake, why  
 "must thou come thy self upon the Earth,  
 "nay, come to bleed and die, to Redeem  
 "me? Am I dearer to thee than thy own  
 "Life, that thou shouldest part with it to  
 "save me? Doeſt thou Love me better  
 "than thou lovest thy self, that thou wilt  
 "shed the last Drop of thy own Hearts  
 "Blood to make me happy? Blessed Jesus!  
 "how unfathomable is thy Grace, and  
 "what an unsearchable Depth of Love  
 "is this, which thou hast opened to us!  
 "O how happy do I think my self in it,  
 "and how doth my Heart rejoyce at the  
 "Remembrance of it! Lord! I love thee  
 "dearly, and long to love thee more.  
 "Would I had the Heart of the *Seraphin*,  
 "that I might be all over Love, and feel  
 "my Soul affected to that degree which I  
 "desire, & thou infinitely deserveſt of me.  
 "I wiſh no greater Pleasure, than to be  
 "found perfect in thy Love, and to have  
 "thee

“ thee so dear unto me, that I can con-  
“ temn all the gilded Vanities and Allure-  
“ ments of this World at the thoughts of  
“ thee. O ! that thou wouldst fill me, if  
“ that might be, with an Affection full  
“ and absolute, like thine own, that so I  
“ might love thee infinitely, as I am belo-  
“ loved by thee. At least possess me with  
“ such a Sense of thy Love, and such  
“ Thankfulness for all thy Favours, as is  
“ somewhat worthy of thee: tho’ should  
“ I offer the utmost Acknowledgments,  
“ which the most affected and enlarged  
“ Heart can pay, I should not give the  
“ thousandth part of what I owe thee.  
“ Let all the Angels adore thy glorious  
“ Goodness, and all the Sons of Men, so  
“ long as they have a Tongue to speak,  
“ set forth thy Noble Praise. For thou,  
“ O sweetest *Jesu*, art the Son of the Blef-  
“ sed, the Joy and Glory of the World,  
“ the Lamb of God, and the Saviour of  
“ Mankind, who wast slain for our sakes,  
“ and art alive again, and sittest now for  
“ ever at the Right-hand of Power, in  
“ the Glory of the Father, that Angels  
“ may submit to thee, and all the World  
“ may worship thee, sing of thee, and  
“ praise thy Goodness, Power, and Glo-  
“ ry, to all Eternity.

2. We must shew ourselves *reconciled to*

*all*

*all who have any ways offended us, and that we are in Peace and Charity with all Persons.* And this we shall not think much to do, if we consider how highly our *dear Lord* is concern'd for them, and how earnestly he *sues in behalf of them*; for then we shall be readily brought to it on *his* account, tho' we might be more averse to it on *their own*. He has loved them so well, as to shed his *precious Blood* for them; and can we find in our Hearts to *hurt* any Person, when we see him giving his own Life to *save* him? He owns them as his *Friends and Brethren*; and is not that enough to make us kind, to see that he is so near *akin* to them? He has made them *Members* of his *Body*, and thereby *Parts* of his own self; and can we study *Revenge* against *them*, when he comes in at last to bear the stroke, and is reach'd in so doing? He becomes a *Petitioner* to us in *their behalf*, and intreats us by virtue of all that he has done to be *Friends again*; and can we have the face to deny him, who has so infinitely obliged us, and ought to command us in every thing? Shall we refuse so small a *Suit* to him, who died for us? or stick to throw away a sinful *Resentment* for his sake, who has parted with his own Hearts *Blood* for ours? Tho' they are most unworthy to be pardoned, yet is he most worthy of it; so that when



he intreats, we must not be backward in it. Nay, we stand daily in a *thousand* times more need of *his Pardon*, than they do of *ours*; so that we block up the way to our own Forgiveness, if we refuse it. For what if they have *injured* us? Have we been altogether innocent, and have offered him no Injuries? What if they have most *ungratefully abused* us, after they had received the most endearing Kindnesses? Have we been duly thankful unto him, and never offended against all his Mercies? Do not we owe him

\* Mat. 18. 24,  
28.

\* *Ten thousand Talents*? whereas their Debt to us is but a Trifle of an *hundred Pence*? And since we are daily asking *him* the Forgiveness of these *vast Sums*, can we at the same time stick at his Instance to remit these *smaller Matters* to our *Neighbours*? Have we the Face to ask Pardon, whilst we have not the Heart to grant it? Or can we hope that Christ should give it us, for the most heinous Sins, at our Request, when we deny it to our Brother, for the smallest Trespasses, at his? Or rather, since he most frankly Forgives us, and that too without upbraiding us, shall not both our own *Necessity*, and the *Example of his Mercy*, engage us to Forgive our offending Neighbours also?

“Lo!

"Lo! here, my Blessed Saviour, (will  
 "a Devout Heart then say) how I cast by  
 "all angry Thoughts, and am Friends  
 "with all the World, as thou requirest  
 "me! They shall all be dear to me, because  
 "I see they are so to thee, who hast gi-  
 "ven thine own Life for their Ransom.  
 "Thou ownest them all as thy Brethren,  
 "and therefore they shall evermore be  
 "mine; for I desire to have the same  
 "Friends, and to go along with thee in e-  
 "very Relation. No Member of thine,  
 "whom before I had never seen, shall e-  
 "ver be a Stranger to me, but I will em-  
 "brace him as a part of my own Body.  
 "Nay, even my bitterest Enemies shall  
 "have no hatred, or hard usage at my  
 "hands, but I am Friends with all the  
 "World, since thou wilt have it so. Shall  
 "not I forgive other men, who am un-  
 "done my self unless I be forgiven? Shall  
 "not I have pity on their Souls, as thou,  
 "Blessed Jesus, hast on mine, and freely  
 "Pardon them, when thou becomest their  
 "Advocate to sue and intercede for  
 "them? O! my Dearest Saviour, I do  
 "from my Heart forgive them, and will  
 "never yield to return their Injuries or  
 "Unkindnesses upon them. Nay, I most  
 "humbly beseech thee, and that by thy  
 "own most precious Blood, that thou

"wouldest forgive them also. Give them  
 "Grace to Repent of what they have  
 "done, and impute not their Trespases  
 "unto them, but receive them, I earnest-  
 "ly intreat thee, into thy Favour, as here  
 "I do truly and unfeignedly into mine.  
 "Hear me, O Blessed Jesu ! both for my  
 "self and them, that we may all be one  
 "with thee, and among ourselves, being  
 "united to thee by a Spirit of Holiness,  
 "and to each other by a Spirit of mutual  
 "Charity and Brotherly Kindness, that  
 "so all the World may know we are thy  
 "Disciples by that Spirit of Love which  
 "thou hast given us.

3. We must *Resign ourselves up to our*  
*Saviour's use, and Repent truly of all our*  
*sins, promising him Faithfully that we will*  
*amend them all thenceforwards.*

We must *Resign ourselves up to our Sa-*  
*vour's use, that he may dispose of us as he*  
*pleases.* And what man can stick at this,  
 who considers that he has *bought* us, and  
 would put us to *no use*, but what is *infi-*  
*nitely for our own Advantage?* Has any  
 Person a better claim to us, than he who  
 bought us with his Blood, and gave his  
 own Life for the Purchase? Should not  
 he have the Benefit of all our Service, who  
 has paid so dear for it, by dying himself  
 instead of us? But if we were at Liberty,  
 and

and he had no Power over us, is there any better way to dispose of ourselves, or could we desire to be in other hands rather than in his? Can we hope for more Wisdom in any one to direct, or more Power to bring our Happiness about, than in him who knows, and governs all things? Durst we trust more to the Faithfulness and Affection of any Heart, than of that which died for us? Or can we think ourselves Happier in any Hands than his, who is in all things studious of our Advantage: For our Blessed Lord seeks no other ends by us, but our own Eternal Happiness; he imposes no Duties on our Consciences, but what he has done himself before us, nay, what, had we the understanding to discern it, we should all have imposed upon ourselves. So that in committing ourselves to his Conduct, we do not give but seek a Benefit, and dispose of ourselves in that way, which is incomparably our highest Interest. We are absolutely his own Right, and 'tis infinitely our own Interest to be wholly given up to him, and govern'd according to his liking; and therefore every considerate man will freely resign his Heart to Christ, and never suffer the World, or his own Lusts to pull it back again.

“Come

"Come then, my Dear and Rightful  
 "Lord, will a poor Soul say, and take  
 "Possession of me. Thou hast bought  
 "me with thine own Blood, a strange  
 "Price for so despicable a Purchase; and  
 "here I come in all Humility to present  
 "thee with what thou hast so dearly got,  
 "and without all reserve to give up my  
 "self unto thee. I know, O Lord, I  
 "am a Deformed, and Polluted Crea-  
 "ture, most unworthy to be offer'd to  
 "so excellent a Majesty. But gladly  
 "would I be thine that thou may'st make  
 "me better, and so adorn me with thy  
 "Grace that I may be fitted for thy self,  
 "and therefore I earnestly beseech thee  
 "to accept me. I humbly beg to be de-  
 "livered from my self, for I am my  
 "own most mortal Enemy. O! that  
 "thou wouldest give thine Holy Spirit  
 "Power over me, and not let my own  
 "Corrupt will any longer govern me,  
 "nor my false heart any more deceive  
 "me, nor my unbridled Passions any  
 "more to reign in me, which alas! have  
 "tyrannized too long already. O! that  
 "thou wouldest Purge my understanding  
 "from all foolish Principles, and all dark-  
 "ness and Ignorance of Holy Things; and  
 "cure my will and affections of all their  
 "stubbornness, and opposition to thy  
 "Laws;

"Laws ; that thou wouldest first take  
 "them as thine own Propriety, and  
 "then fit them for their Masters use,  
 "that I may never hereafter live to my  
 "self, but unto thy Glory. Wilt thou  
 "throw back a Soul, that would hang it  
 "self upon thee? Wilt thou disdain an  
 "Heart that is desirous of thee, and  
 "would fain be no longer its own, but  
 "thine, that thou mightest use it as it  
 "may best serve and honour thee? O  
 "Blessed *Jeshu*! do not reject it, for it is  
 "the Purchase of thy Blood. Let not all  
 "that be thrown away which thou hast  
 "already done for it, for want of thy  
 "further Care and Conduct of it. Ac-  
 "cept me, Good Lord, who here un-  
 "feignedly devote my self unto thee,  
 "that both my Soul and Body, and all I  
 "have, may be employed as thou seest  
 "fit to order me. I am nothing, I have  
 "nothing and I desire nothing, but to be  
 "with thee, to be filled with thy Grace,  
 "and obey thee perfectly ; that so I  
 "may have nothing of my self, but do  
 "all things thro' Christ dwelling in me.

And when we thus *Resign our selves* to  
 our Saviour's Use, we must *heartily re-*  
*pent of all our Sins, faithfully promising*  
*never more to yeild to them, but to amend*  
*them*

them all thenceforwards. To Repent particularly of all our Sins, we must first discover them, by taking some *Catalogue of Christian Duties*, and examining our own Hearts at every one, Whether we have consented to transgress them? And where we find we have, there we must *bemoan our selves*, and *fully resolve*, That if God will be pleased to Pardon what is *past*, we will never *yield* to do the like again. And what Man will not thus steadfastly resolve to *leave* all his Sins, that has the patience to consider what will be the *End of his Continuance* in them? For by that we shall *infinitely offend our Saviour Christ*, who gave his own Life for ours, and whom therefore we are bound to Please above all Persons? we shall *certainly lose the Joys of Heaven*, and *Eternal Happiness*, a Loss which the whole World put together cannot recompence; we shall *unavoidably be doomed to Hell fire* and *Eternal Torments*, which is the utmost height of Misery that can possibly befall us. This will infallibly be the Effect of our *Perseverance* in any Sins we find ourselves guilty of. And now let us ask our own Souls, Whether we love them so well, that we will *endure all this*, rather than *forego* them? Shall I prize my Sin to that degree, as for its sake to act despite to my dearest Lord, who died for me?

me? Must it be dearer to me than his Love, that I should dishonour and offend him whensoever it bids me? Is this the Return I make to my truest, dearest Friend, to side with his professed Enemy? Is this my Thankfulness for all his Kindness, to stick to a Lust that aims at nothing but my Destruction, rather than to him who gave his own Life to save mine? Thou lovest it dearly, O my Soul; but canst thou value it at such a Rate, as to part with Everlasting Life for it? Hadst thou rather have it, than enjoy the Face of God, and be for ever Happy? Art thou content, for the short and unsatisfying Pleasures it affords, to lose all the Joys and Glories of a Blessed Eternity? Wilt thou die sooner than be divorced from it? and accompany it even into the Flames of Hell, and the midst of Eternal Torment? God forbid, will every Man say whose Heart is thus particularly posed, that ever I should be so desperately mad, and unaccountably wicked. *I cannot despite so dear a Lord, or throw away the Eternal Joys of the Heavenly State, or endure the Smart of Hell, and the insupportable Load of Everlasting Torment.* No Man can bear it, and I stand amazed to think of it. And therefore since this will be the Effect of my wicked ways I am resolved from this Moment to renounce



nounce them, and by the help of God will never return to them any more.

Thus let the *Drunkard* think with himself on his *Cups*, the *Swearer* on his *Oaths*, the *unjust Man* on his *unlawful Gain*, the *Contentious* on his *Quarrels*, the *unclean Person* on his *Fornication* and *forbidden Pleasures*, the *vengeful Man* on his *spiteful Carriage*, the *Slanderer* and *Evil-speaker* on his *reproachful Words*, *Back-bitings*, and *Defamations*, and every other *Sinner* on his *particular Sins*. And when they seriously consider, that *this Saviour must be lost*, *this Happiness of Heaven forfeited*, and *this eternal Anguish and Extremity of Pain endured*, if they persist in them; they will instantly *resolve to forsake them*, and never yield to be guilty of them again.

\* *This may be used as a Penitential Confession of our Sins after Self-Examination.*

" I am utterly ashamed to look thee in  
" the Face, considering all the cruel U-

† *This Sentence may be omitted, when this Confession is not before a Sacrament.*

\* " O Blessed Lamb of  
" God, who hast  
" redeemed me with thy  
" Blood, will every Con-  
" trite Heart then cry out,  
" I am utterly ashamed to look thee in  
" the Face, considering all the cruel U-  
" sage I have brought up-  
" on thee. † I scarce  
" know how to think of  
" Feasting on thy preci-  
" ous Blood, now I am  
" most

"most earnestly invited to it, since mine  
 "own Sins have shed it. I am, alas ! a  
 "most pollated Creature, who are daily  
 "offended, in Thought, Word, and  
 "Deed, against thy Divine Majesty. My  
 "Pride, and contempt of  
 "God, and Sensual Lusts, *\* Here mention  
 particular Sins.*  
 "and Covetous Desires,  
 "and uncharitable Practices, have cried  
 "aloud for Vengeance on me, and that  
 "Cry would not be silenced, unless thou,  
 "my Dearest Saviour, wou'dst die instead  
 "of me. Of all these Offences I am guilt-  
 "ty and the horreur of that Guilt would  
 "fright me from thee, were it not that  
 "thou freely callest me to accept of Mer-  
 "cy. I come, Lord, in obedience to thy  
 "Word, and with an humble and a pe-  
 "nitent Heart most earnestly entreat  
 "thee to have pity on me. I am sensible  
 "of these, and all my Errours, and ut-  
 "terly ashamed that ever I committed  
 "them. I am weary of them, and fully  
 "purposed by thy Grace to become a  
 "New Man, or else I durst not ask to be  
 "forgiven. My Heart shall never more  
 "joyn with them, nor will I ever here-  
 "after yield to live in such ungrateful,  
 "and wicked ways again. They nail'd  
 "thy tender Hands and Feet to the ac-  
 "cursed Tree, and thrust the Spear in-  
 "to

“to thy Side; and can I then endure to  
“see, or any longer side with them?  
“They made God, who is the Authour of  
“all I have and hope to enjoy, my utter  
“Enemy; and shall I then be still a Friend  
“to them? They would bring me to e-  
“ternal Destruction both of Body and  
“Soul, and whilst I consider this, is it  
“possible I should have any more to do  
“with them? No, Blessed Lord, I hate  
“them, and am utterly resolved from  
“this time forth for ever to abandon  
“them. They have been the Shame of  
“my Life, and are now the Sorrow of  
“my Heart, as, alas! when thou endu-  
“redst such Anguish for them on the  
“Cross, once they were of thine. I  
“loath my self by reason of them, and  
“will never consent any more to live in  
“them; and with an humble and a con-  
“trite Heart beseech my Heavenly Fa-  
“ther, that through the Merits of thy  
“Blood I may be forgiven. And wilt  
“not thou, O God, who sentest to seek  
“after me whilst I was an open Rebel,  
“now meet me graciously, as thou didst  
“the Prodigal Son, when I return again  
“to my Duty; wilt not thou, my sweet-  
“est Saviour, who diedst for me whilst I  
“was thine unrelenting Foe, now inter-  
“cede for me, when I come to serve  
“thee?

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“thee ? O speak Peace unto my poor  
“Heart, and let me know and feel that  
“thou forgiveſt me ! Send thy Holy  
“Spirit to take poſſeſſion of it, to keep  
“it true unto thy ſelf, that it may never  
“more ſtart back from thee. Thou haſt  
“promiſed thy Grace to thoſe that aſk it,  
“and endeavour in expectation of it, O !  
“I deſire it, and will do what I can to be  
“aſſiſted by it ; and therefore humbly  
“hope this Promiſe ſhall be made good  
“unto thy Servant. Whatſoever thou  
“doeſt in other things, deny me not this  
“Grace, O ! Heavenly Father, for Jeſus’s  
“ſake, who is infinitely dear to thee, and  
“who died for me. *Amen.*

Thus may we *Diſcharge* the Duties of  
this Feaſt, and *excite* and *actuate* in our  
own minds that *Faith*, and *Thankfulneſs*,  
and *Charity*, and *Reſignation*, and *Repentance*,  
which are to render us *fit* and *worthy*  
of it. If any are deſtitute of other  
helps, they may make uſe of theſe Medi-  
tations and Prayers to affect their own  
Hearts, and to ſhew forth theſe Virtues  
of worthy Receivers. They will not al-  
ways find room for *all* theſe Devotions,  
whiſt the Sacrament is Adminiſtrating ;  
but they may go through with all of them  
before they come, for then they may al-  
lot

lot what space they please for them, and make use of such of them as the time allows when they are Receiving. And for a more actual adorning of their Souls with them at that time, whilst the *Minister* himself, or *others* before them are Receiving, they may expresse them all in one *Continued Devotion*, by lifting up their Hearts to God in the words following.

“ O Blessed *Jesu*! who gavest thy self  
“ to die for my sake; how near  
“ have I lain to thy kind Heart, when the  
“ precious Blood that streamed thence  
“ was not so dear to it! I am utterly asha-  
“ med of my self, that ever I should put  
“ thee to part with such a price, and to  
“ endure such exceeding smart and tor-  
“ tures to befriend me. I blush to think  
“ of it, and abhor my sins which brought  
“ thee to it. But since my need required,  
“ & thy boundless Love would make thee  
“ undergo what thou didst, in the utmost  
“ thankfulness of an humble heart, I glad-  
“ ly accept the inestimable Benefit. For  
“ which I love thee most Affectionately,  
“ and will serve thee most Faithfully, and  
“ praise thee most Joyfully, evermore ex-  
“ tolling thy boundless Goodness and glo-  
“ rious Excellencies, and endeavouring  
“ that all others may do so too.

“ Thou

“Thou hast bought me with thy  
 “Blood ; and here with an unfeigned  
 “Heart I give up my Soul and Body, my  
 “Goods, and all I have, to be employ’d  
 “in thy Service, and disposed of as thy  
 “providence shall order me. Take Possession  
 “of me by thy Spirit, that my Body  
 “may always be the Temple of the  
 “Holy Ghost, my Soul and all its Faculties  
 “intirely Devoted to thy Behoof and  
 “Interest, and all my worldly Good ac-  
 “quired so innocently, enjoyed so thank-  
 “fully, spent so temperately, and laid  
 “out so charitably, as becomes thy Faith-  
 “ful Steward. I will not henceforward  
 “call any things my own when once my  
 “Lord has need of them, I freely resign  
 “all up unto thee, sincethou hast paid so  
 “dear for me.

“I have grievously offended thee by ma-  
 “ny sins, particularly by  
 “\* &c. I am perfectly  
 “asham’d of them, and  
 “sorry at my heart that  
 “ever I committed them,

*\* Here name such  
 Sins, as you know  
 your selves most  
 guilty of.*

“and would never do it were they to do  
 “again, and faithfully promise, that  
 “wittingly I will never more yield to  
 “them, and humbly beg, that for Christ’s  
 “sake, in whom thou offerest Pardon to  
 “every penitent Heart, thou wouldst for-  
 “give them.

“Thou

"Thou hast purchased the Holy Spi-  
 "rit for all those who are ready to la-  
 "bour in any Holy Life, and take pains  
 "with it; and offerest him to all such  
 "industrious Souls in this Sacrament. I  
 "desire, O Lord, to amend all these Sins,  
 "which I have here acknowledged; I am  
 "fully bent upon it, and will endeavour  
 "what I can towards it, and depend upon  
 "thy Grace and Aid to carry me through  
 "it: Be it unto thy Servant according  
 "to thy Word.

"I am at Peace, O Lord, with all Per-  
 "sons, and forgive all Offenders against  
 "me, as I expect Forgiveness of my own  
 "Offences at thy Hands, and am fully re-  
 "solved to be kind to all the World, but  
 "especially to all the Members of thy My-  
 "stical Body, for thy sake, that by these  
 "Returns of Charity I may in some sort  
 "answer that infinite Love and Kindness I  
 "receive from thee.

"Thy Blood, O Blessed *Jesus*, has  
 "procured; and thou, Holy Father, for  
 "Christ's sake, hast promised Pardon of  
 "any Sin to every one who Repents of  
 "it, and the Assistance of thy Spirit to  
 "every one that endeavours with it, and  
 "Eternal Life to all that are entirely  
 "Obedient; and callest us to receive  
 "Assurance that thou art still of the same  
 "mind,

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“mind, and wilt make all this good, in  
“this Holy Sacrament. Lord, I hearti-  
“ly repent me of all my Sins, for Christ’s  
“sake do thou pardon me. I am fully re-  
“solved to shew Care, and to labour in  
“the Amendment of all my Faults, let  
“thy Grace and Holy Spirit come in to  
“assist and enable me. I am stedfastly  
“purposed to keep thy Commandments,  
“do thou then graciously accept me for  
“the sake of my crucified Saviour, whose  
“Death I now most thankfully commemo-  
“rate, and who is here offered un-  
“to thee as our Atonement, on this Ta-  
“ble.

*Or shorter, thus :*

“**O** Blessed *Jesus*, who diedst for my  
“sake, and daily still renewest thy  
“Kindness, by shewing thy self well-plea-  
“sed with what thou hast done, and calling  
“me to meet thee in this joyful Commemo-  
“ration of it: I come at thy Com-  
“mand, to shew my self humbly and thank-  
“fully mindful of so Infinite a Benefit.  
“Blessed, yea for ever Blessed be thy Love,  
“which made thee think upon me when I  
“lay in misery; nay, forget thy self, and  
“throw away thine own Life, to save  
“mine. I humbly adore thy marvellous  
“Goodness



" Goodness, which shall ever be the Joy  
 " and Praise, the Wonder and Astonish-  
 " ment of Men and Angels. And O ! that  
 " I may always love thee better than I do  
 " my Life, that so I may not flinch even to  
 " die for thee, as thou hast done for me, if  
 " ever thou shalt call me to it for thy Glo-  
 " ry ! I see in this Bread that is broken,  
 " and this Wine which is poured out,  
 " what cruel Pains my Sins brought to my  
 " dearest Lord, † and  
 " how they stand guilty  
 " of his Body and Blood.  
 " I come with shame and  
 " a troubled Heart to confess it ; I utterly  
 " abhor them for what they have done,  
 " and declare, since they have proved thy  
 " cruel Enemies, they shall evermore be  
 " mine, and that I will never from this day  
 " admit of a Reconciliation. I am here to  
 " assure thee, that I will not live unto my  
 " self or them, but unto thee, and freely  
 " devote all I have to thy use, since thou  
 " hast bought me. I love all Men, and will  
 " embrace them as my Brethren, because  
 " they are thine ; and freely forgive all  
 " the World, even as I desire to be forgi-  
 " ven. O Holy Jesus, according to thy  
 " boundless Mercy accept of these small  
 " returns of thy poor Servant, which  
 " though very mean, alas ! are yet the  
 " best

† Here name Par-  
 ticulars.

“best I have to offer thee, and supply me  
 “with a more abundant measure of thy  
 “Grace, that I may be able to pay back  
 “something more worthy of thee. Let  
 “this Holy Sacrament be the Comfort and  
 “Refreshment of my Heart, conveying  
 “Pardon and Peace to it, and the Enrich-  
 “ing and Establishing of my Spirit with  
 “all the Benefits of thy Blood. Make it  
 “a great increase of present Grace to me,  
 “and a certain pledge of Immortality, to  
 “assure me that I shall ever live with thee,  
 “and be near to that Heart which Dyed  
 “for me. Be it even so for thine own sake,  
 “Blessed Jesu! *Amen.*

In these, or such like words, may we  
 act over all those Virtues which are to  
 render us worthy Communicants, before  
 the *Holy Mysteries* are brought to us. And  
 at the receipt of them, we may lift up our  
 Hearts to God in these, or the like Expres-  
 sions.

After the *Receiving of the Bread*, we may  
 say to our Dearest Lord with an Affection-  
 ate Heart.

“I Receive this, O! my Lord, in remem-  
 “brance of thy Death, and thank thee  
 “most intirely for laying down thine own  
 “Life for me. O! how I rejoyce in thy  
 “marvellous Love, and in this Remem-  
 Y “brance

"brance of it ! I will always live to thee,  
 "and utterly renounce every sin whereby  
 "I have most ungratefully pierced thy  
 "bleeding Heart, and am Friends with all  
 "the World for thy sake, and will extol  
 "thy matchless Bounty whilst I have a  
 "Tongue to speak, giving all Honour,  
 "Glòry, and Praise to thee the Lamb of  
 "God, who wast slain, and now sittest  
 "upon the Throne for evermore.

And in like manner after the receiving  
 of the Cup.

"THE Remembrance of thy Blood-  
 "shedding, O ! sweetest Saviour,  
 "is dear to me ; I can never forget it,  
 "since it was altogether for my sake, and  
 "I owe my very Life to it. In all the  
 "Affection of an infinitely obliged heart  
 "I humbly thank thee for what thou hast  
 "done, and gladly consent to those  
 "Terms of Life and Mercy which were  
 "purchased by it, and will never will-  
 "fully yield to do any thing that is unwor-  
 "thy of so great a Benefit, and embrace  
 "all my Brethren with open Arms, since  
 "thou so requirest it, and desire after  
 "this sort to fulfil thy will in all things,  
 "and adore thy Glorious Goodness, and  
 "shew forth thy boundless Praise to my  
 "Lifes end. " O !

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“O! keep me unalterable in this mind,  
“*may a Devout Soul then go on*, and never  
“suffer my own Corrupt Lusts to turn me  
“from it. I have now, O! Holy Savi-  
“our, taken thee into my Heart. O let  
“thy Presence banish them away, that  
“they may never pretend to it again, since  
“now ’tis Holy to the Lord, nor ever ap-  
“pear to pollute that place wherein so  
“Divine a Guest is lodged. Now thou  
“art pleas’d to enter under my Roof,  
“have me always in thy keeping, for I am  
“safe in no other hands. Preserve the  
“place thou hast taken possession of, and  
“let not thy Enemies and mine any more  
“invade it. Pour into my Heart all the  
“Benefits of thy Crucified Body and  
“Blood, since now by thy wonderful  
“Grace I am made Partaker of them.  
“Thy Blood was shed for the Remission  
“of sins: O! let me know and feel that  
“mine are all forgiven. It obtained the  
“Assistance of thy Spirit and Grace: O!  
“let me ever enjoy that as I stand in need  
“of it. It was the Price thou payedst  
“down for Eternal Life: O! let that  
“finally be my Lot, since thou hast paid  
“so dear for it. Bid me hope assuredly,  
“O Blessed Jesu! that all this shall be  
“made good unto thy Servant, because  
“now thou hast given thy self to me, and  
“fed

“ fed me with thine own Body, whereby  
 “ mayest thou ever dwell in me, and I in  
 “ thee. *Amen.*

And when this is done, whilst others are receiving, we may employ our selves in some of the *foregoing Devotions*; or, when we have enough of them, joyn heartily in the *Prayer*, which is made at the Delivery of the Bread and Wine to *others*; or strike in affectionately with the *Psalms of Praise*, which for the ease and exercise of all, but of those particularly who have already received, is wont at that time to be sung in many Places.

After this sort then may we lift up our Hearts to God, and discharge all those Duties, which are required in every worthy Communicant. When we have no other helps, we may acceptably express them all in a Devout Concurrence with the *Churches Prayers*; since  
 † *Part 1. Chap. 3.* in them, as I have † shewn, there is an actual exercise of all these Duties. But when we can do more, either by the help of *Books* or our own *invention*; we may act them over still more fully in *these*, or such like forms of Devotion.

And

And when all this is done, and this solemn Feast is concluded, we must not think the work of *worthy Receiving* is at an end. For *one* thing still remains, that must employ us always *afterwards*, and that is a *careful performance of all those Promises, which we made to God in this Holy Ordinance.*

In the Sacrament, as has been shew'd, we seek not only a Pardon for what is *past*, but also vow and promise Amendment for the *Future*. And these Promises must be made good afterwards, and it must be our care whilst we Live to fulfil them.

This we are *highly concerned to do*, and it will greatly increase our Guilt and Condemnation if we fall short of it. For if we return to our former sins again, after we have thus solemnly vow'd to forsake them, we are false to our Word, and treacherous where we seem to be most sincere, and seek more especially to be trusted. We break our Faith with God, and go about to delude his Expectation, had he been capable to be imposed upon and believed as we would have had him: which is as great an abuse, as we can well put upon him. And this *doubles* the sin which we commit, and sets God further off from being intreated; for now we have not only

“ fed me with thine own Body, whereby  
 “ mayest thou ever dwell in me, and I in  
 “ thee. *Amen.*

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In the Sacrament, as has been shew'd, we seek not only a Pardon for what is *past*, but also vow and promise Amendment for the *Future*. And these Promises must be made good afterwards, and it must be our care whilst we Live to fulfil them.

This we are *highly concerned to do*, and it will greatly increase our Guilt and Condemnation if we fall short of it. For if we return to our former sins again, after we have thus solemnly vow'd to forsake them, we are false to our Word, and treacherous where we seem to be most sincere, and seek more especially to be trusted. We break our Faith with God, and go about to delude his Expectation, had he been capable to be imposed upon and believed as we would have had him: which is as great an abuse, as we can well put upon him. And this *doubles* the sin which we commit, and sets God further off from being intreated; for now we have not only



the *Fault it self* to answer for, but also this *Perfidiousness*, and *breach of Vows*, which adds a new one to it, and makes it greater. So that after every Sacrament, if we still continue Impenitent, our Guilt is aggravated, and our Souls more endanger'd, and we are greater sinners than we were before.

Thus highly are we concerned to perform the Promises, which we made at the Table of our Lord.

And this we shall be *very like to do*, if we *think often of them every day*, for some time especially, *after we are gone from it*. Indeed, if we forget all we did, and all the Vows we made there to Almighty God; we are like to be the same men still, and must not expect that it should amend us. For the Sacrament, as I have shewn, doth not better us without our own Care, but by helping and ingaging us to Good endeavours after it is over. It works not as a *Natural*, but as a *Moral* means, and improves none, but such as remember what they did thereat, and labour after their own Improvements. So that if we think all our work was done at Church, and fall into a careless and secure state of mind when we get home again; we shall be held still in the same sins, and the matter s not like to be much mended with us by  
such

such Receiving. But if afterwards we frequently remember what we promised there; if we set our own Vows every day before our Eyes, and call to mind our own engagements: that remembrance will give them Force, and make them have their effect upon us. For the thought of our having *promised*, and *solemnly undertook* for any Duties, is the readiest way to have them all *performed*.

To reap that Benefit then which God design'd, and which we expect by it; we must dwell much in our own Thoughts upon what passed there after the Feast is ended. We must maintain that Acquaintance with our Blessed Lord which then we begun, and look upon it, not as a *transient Act*, but as an *entrance on a lasting State*, which ever after we are to continue in. We must bethink our selves daily, that when last we were with our Saviour, we cut out work for our whole Lives, and in that hour made many Promises, which through all the remainder of our days are most Religiously to be performed by us. This course will render it an Ordinance full of Grace and Heavenly Benefits, which will set us on mightily in our virtuous Attainments. And when we reap this profit by it, it will cure all our Indifferency and Aversion to it, and make us run to it the

next time with edge of Appetite, as we would to a most delicious and enlivening entertainment. We shall no more account it a fruitless work, when once we have tasted these sweet and wholesome effects of it ; but desire to share in it oftner as it can be had , and bless the time that ever we came thereto.

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*The End.*

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. Heads

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HEADS OF  
SELF-EXAMINATION,  
FOR

*The Use of those, who would  
find out what Sins they  
have to Repent of, either  
before a Sacrament, or at  
any other Times.*

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*The Particulars of Duty towards God  
and Men, as they are briefly summ'd  
up in the Church-Catechism.*

MY Duty towards God is, to Believe  
*in him, i. e.* to Believe the Scrip-  
tures, which are his Word, taking all the  
Laws of Humility, Charity, &c. there  
recited, for his Laws; and the Promi-  
ses of Pardon and Happiness to the Pe-  
nitent, &c. and the Threatnings of Eter-

# 478 Heads of Self-Examination.

nal Death to all impenitent Sinners, &c. for his Promises and Threatnings, which he will see fulfilled upon us: To *Fear him*, as every Man doth, who dare not do any Evil thing which he sees is offensive to him: To *Love him with all my heart*, &c. as those Persons do, who for his sake do every thing which he bids them: To *Worship him*, to give him Thanks, to put my whole Trust in him, i. e. both in his Providence, for outward Supplies, as I need them; in his Mercy, for Pardon of Sins, when I Repent of them; and in his Spirit, for Grace and inward Aid, when I endeavour together with him: To *Call upon him*, to Honour his Holy Name and his Word, and to Serve him truly all the days of my Life.

My Duty towards my Neighbour is, to Love him as my self, or to do to all Men as I would have them do to me: To Love, Honour, and, when need is, Succour my Father and Mother: To Honour and Obey the King, and all that are put in Authority under him: To Submit my self to all my Spiritual Pastors, and all my Governours: To shew Reverence to all my Betters: To Bear no Malice or Hatred in my Heart: To hurt no Body by Word or Deed: To be True, and Just in all my Dealings: To keep my Hands from Picking and Stealing, and my Tongue from Evil-speaking, Lying and Slandering: To

To  
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*Heads of Self-Examination. 479*

To keep my Body in Temperance, Soberness and Chastity : Not to Covet other Mens Goods : To be Diligent in my own Calling, and do my Duty in that Relation, State, or way of Life, unto which it has pleas'd God to call me.

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*A Particular Enumeration of Sins, whether against God, our Neighbour, or our selves ; taken out of the Measures of Christian Obedience, which are all three explained in the Second Book.*

Sins against our selves are *Pride, i. e.* too high a conceit of our selves, and Contempt of others : *Arrogance, i. e.* Assuming too much to our selves, in setting off our own Praise : *Vain-glory, i. e.* Intemperate Affectation of the Praise of others : *Ambition, i. e.* A restless Pursuit of Honour and Great Places : *Haughtiness,* in contemptuous, scornful Carriage : *Imperiousness, i. e.* A Lordly way of Behaviour, in commanding Men no way subject to us : *Worldliness, i. e.* An over-eager Care of Worldly things : *Gluttony, Voluptuousness, Drunkenness, Revelling, Incontinence,*

## 480 Heads of Self-Examination.

*continence, Lasciviousness, Filthy or Obscene Jestings, Uncleanness, Sodomy, Effeminateness, Adultery, Fornication, Incest, Rape, Covetousness, i. e. Unsatisfiedness with our own, and an impatient Desire of more, or of what belongs to others: Refusing the Cross, i. e. Deserting a Duty to avoid it: Idleness, Sensuality, i. e. An industrious Care to gratifie our Bodily Senses: Carnality, i. e. Subjection to our Fleahly Lusts and Appetites.*

Sins against God, are, *Atheism, Denying Providence, Blasphemy, Superstition, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Foolishness or gross Ignorance of our Duty, Unbelief, Hating God, Want of Zeal, Distrusting him, Not Praying to him, Unthankfulness, Discontent in our present Condition or Repining at his Ordering, Fearlessness or Venturing on any thing, tho' we know it will offend him; Common Swearing, Perjury, Prophaneness, Disobedience.*

Sins against our Brethren at large, where are Sins of

*Injustice; as, Murther, False-witness, Slander, i. e. Defaming them with False things, Lying, Unfaithfulness or Breach of Promise, Theft, Oppression, i. e. Wronging one who cannot cope with us in Contention, Extortion or Depressing in Bargaining, Circumvention or going beyond our Brethren.*

*Unchari-*

*Heads of Self-Examination. 481*

*Uncharitableness*; as, *Wickedness*, i. e. A Delight in doing Mischief, and making others work: *Despising* and *hating* them that are Good, *Giving Scandal* to Weak Brethren, i. e. Laying in their way an Occasion of Sin: *Envy*, *Rejoycing in Evil*, *Uncharitableness in Alms*, *Suffering false Stains* to stick upon them, when 'tis in our power to vindicate them: *Evil-speaking*, or *Divulging* any Ill we hear or know by them: *Censoriousness*, i. e. A proneness to Blame or Condemn them: *Back-biting*, *Whispering*, *Rayling*, *Upbraiding* them with our Kindnesses, *Reproaching* them with their own Faults, *Mocking* them for their Infirmities, *Difficulty of Access*, *Affronting* them, *Uncourteousness*, *Uncondescension*, *Unhospitableness* towards Strangers, *Surliness*, *Malignity* or putting the worst Sense on what is said or done by others: *Unquietness*, *Unthankfulness*, *Anger*, *Variance*, *Bitterness*, *Clamour*, *Hatred* and *Malice*, *Implacableness* or Difficulty in being appeased after any Offences: *Revenge*, or *Returning Ill for Ill*: *Cursing Enemies*, *Hastiness* and *Rigour* in exacting Punishments.

*Discord*; as, *Unpeaceableness*, *Emulation* or *Provoking* one another: *Pragmaticalness* or being *Busy-Bodies*: *Talebearing*, *Not satisfying* for Injuries, *Contentiousness*,



482 *Heads of Self-Examination.*

*tentiousness, Division and Faction, Heresie, Schism, Tumult.*

*Sins against our Brethren in Particular Relations.*

*Sins against Sovereign Princes ; as, Dishonour, Irreverence, Speaking Evil of Dignities, Refusing Tribute and Taxes, Traitorousness, Neglecting to Pray for Kings, Disobedience to them, Resistance and Rebellion.*

*Sins against Bishops and Ministers ; as, Dishonour of them, especially for their Works sake: Irreverence, Not Providing for them, Sacrilege or taking away, either by Force or Fraud, those Just Dues, which are given to God for their Support : Not Praying for them, Disobedience.*

*Sins of Married Persons ; as, Unconcernedness in each others Condition Not bearing each others Infirmities, Provoking each other, Estrangedness, Publishing each others Faults, Not Praying for each other, Jealousie. Of the Husband against the Wife ; as, Not maintaining her with convenient Supplies, Not protecting her from outward Annoyances, Imperiousness or a harsh and magisterial exercise of Commands: Uncompliance with her Reasonable Desires, and Uncondescension to her Pitiabie Weaknesses. Of the Wife against the Husband ; as, Dishonour in inward Esteem and Opinions,*

*Heads of Self-Examination.* 483

nions, *Irreverence* in outward Carriage, *Unobservance* in not forecasting to do what may please him, *Disobedience* to his just Commands, *Casting off his Yoke* or *Unsubjection*.

Sins of *Parents* and *Children*; as, *Want of Natural Affection*, *Not Praying* for each other, *Imprecation*. Of the *Parents* against the *Children*; as, *Not providing* for them, *Irreligious* and *Evil Education*, *Provoking them to Anger* by *Imperious Harshness*, and *needless Severity* in *Governing*. Of the *Children* against the *Parents*; as, *Dishonour* in their *Minds*, *Irreverence* in their *Behaviour*, *Being ashamed* of them, *Mocking* them, *Speaking Evil* of them, *Stealing* from them, *Disobedience* to their *Lawful Commands*, *Contumacy* or *Casting off Subjection* to them.

Sins of *Brothers* and *Sisters*; as, *Want of Natural Affection*, *Not providing* for our *Brethren*, *Not Praying* for them, *Praying against* them.

Sins of *Masters* against their *Servants*; as, *Not maintaining* them, *Not Catechising* or *Instructing* them, *Unequal Government*, or *Injustice* shewn in requiring *Unlawful*, *Wantonness* in requiring *Suerfluous*, and *Rigour* in requiring *Unmerciful* things of them: *Immoderate Threatning*, *Imperiousness*, or *Contemptuous*, *haughty treating*.  
or

#### 484 *Heads of Self-Examination.*

of them : *Defrauding*, or *keeping back the Wages of the Hireling*. Of *Servants against their Masters*, as, *Dishonour*, *Irreverence*, *Publishing* or *aggravating their Master's Faults*, *Not clearing*, when they can, his *injured Reputation*, *Unfaithfulness* in what he intruists with them, shewn either by their *Wastefulness*, *i. e.* Spending it for their *Pleasure*; or *Purloyning*, *i. e.* Diverting it to their own *Profit* and *secret Enrichment* : *Disobedience*, *Non-observance*, *Answering again*, *Slothfulness*, *Eye-service*, *Resistance*, *Not Praying for him*, *Praying against him*.

To all which, add two other Sins, which are peculiarly so among Christians, *viz.* The *Neglect of Baptism*, and *Absenting from the Lord's Supper*.

When we are desirous to discover all our Sins, that we may truly Repent of them, we may examine our own Hearts in all these Particulars, trying ourselves either by the *former Catalogue* when we have less, or by this *latter* when we have more Time, according to our own Discretion. We may ask ourselves at every one, Whether we ever *wittingly yielded* to it? and if we have, Whether since that time we have *amended* it? And noting all those whereof we stand guilty before God,

*Heads of Self-Examination.* 485

God, affect our own Hearts with a sorrowful sense of what we have done, from such Considerations as are before laid down; and then renew our Vows, and make God our humble Confession, and Engagements that we will never have more to do with them. For which end, they who are not otherwise supplied, may make use of the *Devotion*, p. 448. which may serve as a *Penitential Prayer* and *Confession*.

---

A.

A  
PRAYER

Before the  
SACRAMENT.

**O** Father of Mercies, who hast  
once given thy Son to die for  
me, and art now ready in the Holy  
Sacrament to offer him to me again, I  
humbly adore, but am utterly at a loss  
when I would duely prize so invaluable  
a Mercy. What am I, poor wretched  
Creature, that I should sit down to eat  
with my Blessed Lord, when the Glori-  
ous Angels at a distance adore, and  
pay him Homage? Why should I be  
call'd to feed upon his Sacred Body and  
Blood, when my Sins had a hand in all  
he suffered, so that I deserve to be rank-  
ed among his Murderers, who were  
guilty of that horrid Fact, which no-  
thing but the Blood they shed could ever  
expiate?

A Prayer before the Sacrament. 487

expiate? But since it is thy Glorious Excellency, O Blessed Jesu! to love those that hate thee, and to save their Lives who barbarously took away thine, and accordingly to call to this Heavenly Feast so unworthy a Wretch as I am; I am ready to come at thy Command, but would fain come Worthily, and leave all my Sins behind me, seeing it is no Feast for them. O! I loath them, and would never yield to commit them, were they to do again; and humbly intreat my Heavenly Father, that for thy sake he would freely forgive me what is past, and rid me of them for the time to come. Slay them, Good Lord, for they have slain thee, and will slay me too in time, if they are suffer'd to reign in me. Meet me in this Heavenly Banquet with a full Pardon of all mine Offences, and a perfect Cure of all mine Infirmities, that I may be cleansed by thy Blood; and quickned by thy Spirit, and assured of that Eternal Life, which for thy sake God has promised to all his Elect ones.

All this thou art ready to do for me,  
if

*if I come worthily. And therefore my humble Request is, That thou wouldst assist me acceptably to perform the Duties of this Feast, that so I may enjoy all the Blessings of it, and feel it a Communion of thy very Body and Blood. I would gladly remember thy Dying Love with the most Devout Affections, with a Heart that is full of Thanks, and intirely devoted to thy Service, and quite weary of my Sins, and most desirous of thy Grace, and thoroughly prepared to seal a lasting Covenant of Repentance and Reconciliation with thee, and all my Neighbours. All this I desire to do, and to do it fervently: But, alas! I cannot do it as I ought, unless thou wilt graciously come and help me. My Apprehensions of this amazing Love are very low; O do thou exalt them. My Heart is still insensible of what thou hast done for me, and my Affections dull and heavy; O do thou quicken and inflame them. Make me love thee as much as 'tis possible for my Heart to love any, and desire thy Grace as highly as I need it, and be set*  
against

*against every Sin as irreconcilably as there is cause for it, and love all my Brethren as I am beloved, that I may be fit to receive the abundant Communications of thy Grace in the approaching Sacrament. I earnestly ask, and humbly hope for all this, O Good God, only because I infinitely need it; and thy Grace is Infinite, which will not suffer thee to see the Necessities of thy poor Servant unsupplied; and unworthy as I am, I am still the Purchase of thy Son's Blood. O! then do not despise me for thine own Mercies, and thy Son's sake; in whose Holy Name and Words I farther Pray as he hath taught me.*

Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.



A

*Prayer and Thanksgiving*

After the

## SACRAMENT.

**I** Thank thee most intirely, O ! my God, for calling me this day to thy own Table, to shew me how thine only Son freely died in my stead, and to assure me that now for his sake thou art fully Reconciled, and wilt live in me by thy Grace now at present, and raise me up to be Eternally happy with thy Self at last ; of all which thou hast given me the surest Pledges in his precious Body and Blood. What can I render to thee, Holy Father, or to thee my dearest Saviour, for so incomprehensible a Benefit ? I admire thy marvellous Love, and magnifie it above all things. Thy Praise shall ever be in my Mouth, and I will tell out thy wondrous

A Prayer and Thanksgiving, &c. 491

drous works with Gladness. And may all hearts adore, and every Tongue confess, that thou, Holy Jesus, art the Saviour of the World, and the Son of the Father, whom Heaven and Earth must Honour, and call Blessed for evermore.

Pardon, O ! Good God, the unaffectedness of my dull Heart, in the receipt of so inestimable a Treasure. And fill me with Desires some way suitable to my needs, and the richness of thy Mercies, that whenever this Cup of Blessings shall again overflow, my Heart may run over with Joy and Thankfulness also. Let me never forget the Love I have Received, and the Peace I have seal'd, and the Promises of New Life I have made this Day ; but as thy Grace has help'd me to them, so keep me in a lively sense of them, and enable me always to fulfil the same to my Lives end. Now thou hast given me the Blood of Expiation to shew we are Friends ; O ! never let me be guilty of any thing to break the Peace, which is now so solemnly ratified betwixt

# 492 A Prayer and Thanksgiving

twixt us. Now I have vow'd Obedience to thy Laws, to be Humble, Chast, Temperate, Just, Charitable, Patient, Devout,

\* Here mention  
Virtues particularly  
vow'd at the  
Lord's Table.

\* and entirely resign'd  
to thy Will and Pleasure;  
O! let me not  
start back again from

these Holy Promises for ever! Now I have received my Blessed Lord, never suffer me to do any thing unworthy of him; now I am Partaker of his Body and Blood, let his Holy Spirit go along with them, and then I shall be what I ought when I am in his keeping. My sins, which I have renounced, will return again, except he chase them away; and my false Heart, which now seems fixt for God, will revolt, unless he establish it. O! sweetest Saviour, let thy Body be my Food, thy Strength my Guard, thy Spirit my Life, and the sense of thy Favour my greatest Joy and Comfort. Go on Graciously to accomplish what thou hast now begun in me, and let me ever be secure and happy in thy Custody. Be it even so, for thine own sake, Blessed Jesu!

And

after the Sacrament. 493

And then, where there is time for it, or afterwards, where there is not, may they go on, and say;

*Give thy Grace, O Holy Jesu ! to all the World, and let all who were Redeemed by thy Blood, acknowledge thee to be the Lord; and become thy Worshipers and Faithful Servants. Make all Christians Conscientious Practisers of that Holiness, which they profess. And above all, inspire them with uniting Principles and charitable Hearts, that by their loving one another, as thou hast loved us, all the World may know they are thy Disciples. Let all Governours Rule with Wisdom and Justice, and Subjects obey with Love and Chearfulness. Let the Priests of the Lord be Exemplary in their Lives, and Discreet and Diligent in their Labours, having a most compassionate Love for Souls : and let the People be Humble and Towardly, most desirous to hearken, and fully bent to follow wise Instructions. Be a help at hand to all that need and are afflicted. Send supplies to all that are*

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in

494 A Prayer and Thanksgiving  
*in want, and assist them contentedly to  
depend upon thee. Raise Friends to  
the Widow and Fatherless, the Pri-  
soners and Captives, and all that  
groan under Oppressors, who are thrown  
upon thy Mercy. Give Repentance,  
Patience, and Resignation to all that  
are sick, and Ease when thou seest it  
convenient for them. Be a Comfort-  
ter to all troubled Consciences, helping  
them to an acceptable Holiness, and en-  
lighten their minds about all cause-  
less Scruples, that they may not fear  
where no Fear is. Succour all that are  
tempted, with such a measure of thy  
Grace, as may enable them to stand in  
all their Tryals. Think particularly  
on all my Friends, who are especially  
endeared to me by their Kindnesses  
or Acquaintance; on all my Relations  
in the Flesh; on all that Pray particu-  
larly for me, or desire my Prayers.  
Teach us all to desire what thou ap-  
provest, and then grant us whatsoever  
is desired. Prevent us in all our Acti-  
ons, and Guard us against all Dangers,  
and Relieve us in all Straights, and  
grant*

after the Sacrament. 495

*grant that we may always make thee  
our Stay and Confidence, and take all  
things well which thou orderest for us.  
Shorten all our Sorrows, and prevent  
all our Sins, and fit us all for that  
Eternal Kingdom which thou hast pre-  
pared for us, for Jesus's sake, in whose  
Holy Name and Words I further pray  
unto thee.*

Our Father, &c.

Being sensible how plain minds, who  
are ready to do it so far as they are in-  
abled, are oft-times at a loss for their  
*Daily Devotions*; and not knowing but  
this Treatise may fall into some such  
Hands; I have added *two* Prayers, which  
such Persons may say *Morning* and *Even-  
ing* in their Families.

28 00 02

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A

A  
Morning Prayer.  
FOR A  
FAMILY.

**O** God, who art the Giver of all good Gifts, and the Father of Mercies, we thine unworthy Servants intirely desire to praise thy Name for all the Expressions of thy Bounty towards us. Blessed be thy Love, that gave thy Son to die for our Sins, to put us in a way of being happy, if we would obey thee; and after all our wilful Refusals of thy Grace, still hast patience with us, and hast added this one Day more to all we have mispent already, to see if we will finish the Work thou hast set us to do, and sit ourselves for Eternal Glory. Pardon, Good Lord, all our former Sins, and all our Abuses of thy Forbearance, for which now we are sorry at our Hearts;

A Morning Prayer for a Family. 497

*Hearts ; and give us Grace to lead more Holy Lives, and be more careful in improving all future Opportunities Make thy self present to our Minds, and let thy Love and Fear rule in our Souls, in all those Places and Companies, where our Occasions shall lead us this Day. Keep us Chast in all our Thoughts, Temperate in all our Enjoyments, Humble in all our Opinions of ourselves, Charitable in all our Speeches of others, Meek and Peaceable under all Provocations, Sincere and Faithful in all our Professions, and so Just and Upright in all our Dealings, that no Necessity may force, nor Opportunity in any kind allure us, to defraud or go beyond our Neighbours. When thou bestowest Good on others, let not us envy, but rejoyce in it, and when thou addest any to ourselves, let us own thy Mercy, and humbly thank thee for it. Afford us convenient Supplies in all our reasonable Necessities, and protect us against the approach of all Dangers. Make us diligent in all our Business, and give such Success to our Endeavours,*

Z 3



## 498 A Morning Prayer

vours, as thou seest most expedient for us; and teach us contentedly to submit, and not to repine at any thing that happens by the Allotment of thy Providence. In all our Passage through this World, and our manifold Concerns in it, suffer not our Hearts to be too much set upon it; but always fix our Eye upon the Blessed Hope, that as we go along we may make all the Things of this World minister to it, and be careful above all things to fit our Souls for that pure and perfect Bliss, which thou hast prepared for all that Love and Fear thee, in the Glories of thy Kingdom.

Extend thy Grace, we farther beseech thee, to all Men, in all Places; especially to the Governours and Subjects, to all both High and Low, Rich and Poor, that pray for it, or need it, in these Kingdoms. Bless all our Relations, who are near us in the Flesh, and all our Friends and Benefactors, who are endeared to us by their Kindnesses. Forgive all  
our

for a Family.

499

*our Enemies, give them Hearts to fear thee, and to be kind to us. And supply all us, and all others, with whatsoever else thou seest proper for us, for Christ his sake; in whose Blessed Name and Words we still recommend ourselves unto thee, saying,*

Our Father, &c.

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A N

Evening Prayer

F O R A

FAMILY.

**O** Most Gracious God, who daily multipliest upon us thy Mercies, notwithstanding we every day renew our Provocations; Accept, we beseech thee, of our most humble and hearty Thanks for thy unspeakable Kindness towards us. *Blessed*

sed be thy Goodness, which has this day supplied us with Food and Necessaries, and preserved us in Health, the chiefest of all outward Enjoyments, and prosper'd the Work of our Hands, and lent us our Friends to be still a Support and Comfort to us. Adored be thy Love and Patience, which hast allowed us one Day more to amend our Ways, and assisted us by the Suggestions of thy Spirit, and thy gracious Providences, to make up that Resignation, Humility, Contentedness, Chastity, Sobriety, Meekness, Charity, and other Virtues, which are yet wanting in our own Souls. We desire to shew ourselves duely sensible of these endearing Benefits, by learning to depend upon thy Providence, which has been so watchful over us; and to be contented with thy Orderings, which are so wisely fitted to our own Advantage; and applying all Opportunities to the encrease of that Righteousness and Holy Living, which thou requirest at our hands. We fain would do it, and are here sincerely resolved to endeavour it; and thou hast promised to aid all those who labour in so good a Work. Be it then, O Lord, unto thy Servants according to thy Word, and enable us by thy Grace and Holy Spirit so to do.

We are sensible, O God, how highly we have offended thee, although we stand thus indebted

indebted, or all we have, or hope to enjoy to thy Bounty. How many ways have we dishonour'd our Profession, and revolted from the Vows we made in Baptism, by Pride, and Envy, and Anger, and Discontent, and Evil-speaking, and serving divers Lusts, which then we utterly renounced, and promised never to live in again? We are heartily grieved and ashamed for these, and all other our Mis-doings, and are fully resolved by thy Grace hereafter to amend them. We unfeignedly Repent of them, and for Christ's sake humbly beg to be Forgiven, and that thy Grace and Holy Spirit may rid us of them for the time to come. Our full purpose is to endeavour it, and thy Promise is to help us in it: O let thine Arm be our Almighty Aid, and then we shall return to them no more.

Keep us in thy good Providence this Night, make our Sleep safe and refreshing to us. Fit us for our great Change, that it may not surprize us unawares, but that having led holy Lives, we may be happy in our Deaths, and have Comfort and well-grounded Hope in thee.

Give all Men Grace to Repent, and become thy Servants. Let all Christians live up to the Laws of that Religion, which they profess. Especially Bless these Kingdoms wherein we live. Let our Governours Rule  
with

502 An Evening Prayer, &c.  
with Justice, and our People Obey with  
Chearfulness. Make the Rich and Prose-  
rions Temperate in Using, and Charitable  
in Distributing of their Substance, and the  
Poor and Afflicted, Patient and Contented  
under their Burthens: And cause us all to  
Love as Brethren, to be Pitiful and Tender-  
hearted towards all Men. Preserve our  
Friends in their Souls and Bodies; Forgive  
our Enemies, and make them kindly affected  
towards us: And do whatsoever thou seest  
fitting for us all, for the sake of thy Son,  
our Advocate, Jesus Christ, who has taught  
us in his own Words thus to Pray.

Our Father, &c.

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